WORLD / A27
CIA deceived US Congress for years

ENTERTAINMENT / F4
Empty (coffin) talk and other sidelights at MJ memorial

ACROSS / A16
Tesda strips 500 Bacolod youths of scholarships; politics blamed

BUSINESS / B1
ADB sets aside $ 4.3B in aid to cut RP poverty

Cory 'stable, conscious, slowly recovering'

By Fe Zamora

COMFORTING NEWS ABOUT FORMER President Corazon Aquino was relayed yesterday to those who had been storming heaven with prayers for her recovery.

The cancer-stricken Aquino is "stable, comfortable and conscious," her spokesperson Deedee Siytangco said after the last of the nine-day healing Masses was celebrated at the Greenbelt 5 chapel in Makati City.

CORY A11

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Friday, July 10, 2009 ★ Vol. 24 / No. 212

Palace heralds GMA 'farewell' Sona 'great'

By Christian V. Esguerra

TAKE IT FROM ONE OF her mouthpieces, President Macapagal-Arroyo's "farewell" State of the Nation Address (Sona) is certain to be "great."

PALACE A11

AFP told: Stop talk, get bombers

JDV sure on Palace martial rule plan if . . .

By Philip C. Tubeza, TJ Burgonio and Michael Lim Ubac

WILL SEPTEMBER 2009 SEE A repeat of September 1972?

Undaunted by Malacañang's denunciations that he was peddling lies, ousted Speaker Jose de Venecia yesterday said President Macapagal-Arroyo could declare martial law as early as September if she did not gather enough votes in Congress to change the Constitution.

Speaking before the Rotary Club of Manila, De Venecia said Ms Arroyo would push for Charter change (Cha-cha) either during her State of the Nation Address on July 27 or immediately afterwards before recessing a constituent assembly (Con-ass) next month.

"If they are unable to get the three-fourths vote necessary to amend the Constitution, their

JDV SURE A10

Send-off shines MJ image for posterity

LOS ANGELES—THE GLOBAL send-off for Michael Jackson was not just a goodbye. The lavish tributes may have also planted the seeds for the next god in the King of Pop's career: rehabilitating his image for posterity.

The Jackson family can find a model in Elvis Presley, who in his final years had turned into a media laughing stock, but is now fondly remembered worldwide as the King of Rock 'n' Roll.

Jackson's memorial service on Tuesday, which brought some of the entertainment world's top names together before a television audience of hundreds of millions, won rave reviews for being moving yet tasteful.

Before Jackson's gold-plated, flower-covered coffin, the ser-

SEND-OFF A15

US Congress probes $11-B bottled water industry

BOTTLED WATER MAKERS make millions off people who believe their products are purer than tap water. But consumers do not realize that they are less regulated than plain-old tap water, according to a US congressional report released on Wednesday.

Concerned about the safety of bottled water, US lawmakers requested information from 13 bottled water sellers, including PepsiCo, Coca-Cola and Nestlé, about the source of their water and its testing.

In Australia, residents of a rural town took a more drastic action.

US CONGRESS A15

GUILTY BEYOND REASONABLE DOUBT Amin Imam Boratong and his second wife Sheryl Molera (right, head bowed) after they were sentenced by Judge Abraham B. Borreta of the Pasig Regional Trial Court Branch 154. Acting Justice Secretary Agnes Devanadera hails the five women prosecutors for the conviction: Anjanette Ortile, Amor Robles, Elizabeth Bardal, Eden Wabap-Valdez and Maribel Baingan. The couple were brought to court escorted by 200 NBI agents. JOEY MENDOZA

'Shabu market' operator, wife get life

By Beverly T. Natividad and Tina G. Santos

THE OPERATOR OF A "SHABU TIANGGE" (drug market) near the Pasig City Hall that police raided three years ago was sentenced yesterday to life imprisonment. Police said the operation had earned P900 million selling shabu (methamphetamine hydrochloride) at the market.

Amin Imam Boratong and his second wife Sheryl Molera Boratong each got a life term for violating Section 5 of Republic Act No. 9165 (Dangerous Drugs Act).

Judge Abraham B. Borreta of the Pasig Regional Trial Court's Branch 154 found the two guilty beyond reasonable doubt for jointly running the drug market in the Mapayapa Compound on E. Soriano Street.

The court gave credence to the testimony of Nanette Polea, Boratong's right-hand man for the Mapayapa drug operations and the main witness of the Philip-

SHABU MARKET A4

SC asked to stop poll automation deal today

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan and Kristine L. Alave

"MISGUIDED AND ILL-CONceived."

That's how a group of 10 lawyers and citizens described a P7.2-billion deal in a petition they filed in the Supreme Court yesterday for a temporary restraining order (TRO) to stop the Commission on Elections (Comelec) from signing today the contract to automate next year's balloting.

The group led by lawyer and administration critic Harry Roque alleged that Comelec and the joint-venture Smartmatic International and its local partner Total Information Management (TIM) violated the automated elections law (Republic Act No. 9369).

In a 48-page petition, the group said that while it favored an automated balloting "that will finally do away with the travails of the long wait and rampant cheating," it was against the "misguided and ill-conceived conduct" of the Comelec tender.

The group warned that the project "promises to be yet another multibillion scam like its multibillion predecessors, the Mega Pacific automated counting machine project," referring

SCAMBID A17

Teodoro alarmed by info on terrorists

By Jocelyn R. Uy, TJ Burgonio and Allison W. Lopez

SHUT UP AND JUST catch them.

Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro Jr. yesterday gave this stern order to the Armed Forces after the military commander for Metro Manila divulged ostensibly raw information about the presence of al-Qaida-linked terrorists in the metropolis.

Teodoro told reporters he had ordered the military high command to look into the basis of Maj. Gen. Jogy Leo Pojas' statements to the media that three or four bombers linked to Islamist terror groups may have slipped into the capital.

"I want to know how deep and gross the information is and if it were true, what are the operations being done (by the military) because we want to see them apprehended," Teodoro told reporters after speaking at a presidential forum hosted by the Rotary Club of Intramuros in Manila.

He said he had also reminded the military that only the Anti-Terrorism Council headed by Secretary Eduardo Ermita could talk about matters involving bombings.

ARTICLES A10

Gloria back in Pampanga: 16th this year

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

GUAGUA, PAMPANGA—TWICE, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday dodged reporters' question on her state of health.

But her actions here, her first local sortie after an official trip from Brazil and a biopsy on the left breast, showed a healthy, busy and working President.

In the Guagua visit—her third for the town and 16th in her home province's second district since February—Ms Arroyo

GLORIA A10

CORN-Y PLAYGROUND A child displaced by the fighting between gov't troops and MILF rebels plays on a mound of corn cobs at the Talayan municipal hall in Maguindanao. Evacuees from all over central Mindanao have resorted to borrowing private lands to plant crops or operate small-scale ventures. ERIC SONGCO, AFP PHOTO/ISAFP

President cancels visit to Cotabato

By Edwin Fernandez
in Cotabato City
and Michael Lim Ubac
in Manila

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo canceled her scheduled visit to Cotabato City today amid protests over a rash of bombings in Mindanao, officials said.

The business community in Cotabato announced shops will shut down today and Catholic churches will hold Masses for peace.

At least eight people were killed while nearly 100 others were wounded when bombs went off in Cotabato City on Sunday and in Jolo and Tagaytay City on Tuesday.

In the latest attack, unidenti-

PRESIDENT A10

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Cagayan, Northern Isabela, Kalinga, Apayao, Abra, Ilocos and Batanes will have cloudy skies with rain showers. The rest of Luzon will have mostly cloudy skies with isolated rain showers. The rest of the country will be mostly cloudy.

Metro Manila	Mostly cloudy	Tuguegarao	Mostly cloudy
Baguio	Mostly cloudy	Aparri	Mostly cloudy
Dagupan	Rain	Cubo	Mostly cloudy
Legaspi	Rain	Catarman	Mostly cloudy
Puerto Princesa	Mostly cloudy	Cebu	Mostly cloudy
Iloilo	Mostly cloudy	Tacloban	Mostly cloudy
Kalibo	Mostly cloudy	Cotabato	Mostly cloudy
Roxas	Mostly cloudy	Davao	Mostly cloudy
Zamboanga	Mostly cloudy	Dipolog	Mostly cloudy

Weather Alert: Tue 08 HEAVIER DRIZZLING and 5:00P for Metro + Tue HEAVIER DRIZZLING and 5:00P for Metro

Second FRONTPAGE

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4PM Draw: 22 23 EZ2* 6PM Draw: 10 22
*Ten-minute service

SUERTRES* 2PM Draw: 4 5 1 SIX DIGIT* 2PM Draw: 2 7 6 2 3 3
9PM Draw: 6 5 8 SUPERLOTTO 6/49 6PM Draw: 15 22 29 39 46 47
9PM Draw: 0 4 5 P26,652,837.60

WB urges gasoline tax hike

By Reena V. Domingo

THE WORLD BANK HAS SUGGESTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT consider raising the excise tax on gasoline to boost the national coffers in the face of a ballooning budget deficit.

"To ensure quality implementation of the fiscal stimulus plan, the government could consider further desirable revenue measures, such as raising gasoline excises," the bank said in its latest quarterly update on the Philippines.

Although mixed prices of fuel are "not particularly low," the bank noted that for an oil-importing country, petroleum products in the Philippines are lightly taxed by international standards.

"Gasoline is the most highly taxed product and has an effective tax rate of about 25 percent of the retail price partly because its specific excise rate of P4.35 per per liter has been fixed in nominal terms since 1998," the bank said.

The excise tax on diesel was increased when VAT coverage was extended to fuels in 2006, and the full rate was increased from 10 percent to 12 percent.

"Mostly as a result of the sun-indexation of gasoline, petroleum excise collection as one percentage point of GDP (the usual order of revenues output) rose to 2.09% than it was a decade earlier," the WB added.

By contrast, the decrease in excise revenue from tobacco was less than a third of what was lost on petroleum products, the bank said.

Immediate revenue

The WB said that increasing petroleum excises would produce immediate revenue gains and help ensure the fiscal stimulus program remained controlled and responsible. It also urged the government to focus on its medium-to-long-term revenue-raising measures.

Such a move would also improve "the progressivity of the tax system as petroleum products are disproportionately consumed by the rich or citizens," it said.

Easing congestion

A higher excise tax on gasoline would reduce the cost of the negative effects of gasoline consumption, such as congestion and pollution, the bank said.

It noted that congestion and pollution were "especially bad" in Metro Manila, which dampens the country's competitiveness and poor health problems.

"Higher excise taxes on gasoline would lessen road traffic and partly decongest transport infrastructure [and thus lower] transportation costs," the bank said.

Hard-pressed on raising more revenues to fund the government's economic stimulus program and deficit spending, the government has been urging Congress to pass the 10th-ranking sponsored bills seeking to impose higher taxes on alcohol and tobacco products that have been languishing in the legislature.

Last Wednesday, however, Finance Undersecretary Gil S. Beltran said the government has softened its stance on the urgent need to implement higher excise taxes on alcohol and tobacco products this year following a "consultation with industry players."

'Aid cuts should force RP to be self-reliant'

AN IMPENDING DECLINE IN DEVELOPMENT aid from the world's rich nations was cited to compel the Philippines to be more self-reliant in funding basic services, a former national treasurer said yesterday.

Lizonor Briones, lead convener of the Social Watch Philippines, raised the concern at the three-day summit of the Group of Eight (G8) convening in L'Aquila, Italy next today.

Briones said this change in sentiment concerning aid among the rich countries means that the Philippines should stop looking to the international community to compensate for the deficient funding for health, education and other social services "because we are not their priority."

Citing the National Economic and Development Authority's portfolio review of official development assistance (ODA) for the first quarter of 2009, Briones said ODA had declined by 10.1 percent, from $172 billion in the same period in 2008.

Breaking the trend

She said the budget for next year should break the trend of the decreasing share of social services in national government expenditures.

"It should reflect greater self-reliance in funding essential services. The Arroyo administration should also refrain from unnecessarily withholding funds appropriated for these purposes," she added.

Briones was in Germany last week as part of a development partner bilateral donor Bitagarok-Dialac to lobby with G8 countries to increase aid to developing countries.

A recent statement from German Chancellor Angela Merkel that the G8 is no longer the appropriate forum to solve the world's problems was alarming, said Briones.

"This sends the wrong signal to other donor countries outside the G8 that it is all right to renege on aid commitments," she said.

Germany is a member of the G8, along with Canada, France, Italy, Japan, Russia, United Kingdom and United States.

In 2005, the G8 committed to increase aid to developing countries by $50 billion until 2010 but the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development—to which all G8 countries except Russia belong—estimated that it will fall short of its commitments by as much as $20 billion.

Summit host

Italy, which is hosting the G8 Summit, is being criticized for slashing, instead of increasing, aid.

"This does not bode well for the poor in developing countries like the Philippines whose level of dependence can only be worsened by the global economic and climate crises," Briones said.

Briones is visiting G8 member countries in Europe as a member of WE, a group of eight women representing national movements for health, education and basic services in eight developing countries.

Oxfam International released the WE which includes India, Georgia, Bangladesh, Mali, Thailand, Nicaragua, Malawi and the Philippines.

The WE group will ask the G8 leaders to keep giving foreign aid as the lives of millions in developing countries depend on it. —Jerome Aning

WB says RP economy to contract

THE ECONOMY WILL CONTRACT this year for the first time in 11 years, the World Bank said yesterday, cutting its 2009 growth forecast for the Philippines to minus 0.5 percent.

The bank adjusted downward the forecast it made in April of 1.8 percent growth in gross domestic product (GDP) for the country.

However, the government insists the economy is still on track to grow by between 0.8 and 1.8 percent this year.

The GDP slipped to minus 0.5 percent in 1998 following the Asian financial crisis.

After a sharp quarter-on-quarter downturn in the first months to March, when GDP grew 0.4 percent from a year earlier, "a year-on-year 0.5 percent contraction is now expected for 2009 and a modest recovery is projected for 2010," the bank said in its quarterly country update published yesterday.

It said a substantial downward revision in global prospects for the year would impact on the country's exports as well as on remittances by its large overseas work force. The drop in remittances already led to a drop in domestic demand in the January-March period, the World Bank said.

A P330 billion fiscal stimulus package by the government has had "a delayed impact," it said. —AFP

CIA chief's visit routine—DFA

THE FORTHCOMING VISIT TO MANILA of Leon Edward Panetta, head of the United States Central Intelligence Agency, this Sunday has nothing to do with the recent bombing incidents in Mindanao.

This was stressed yesterday by the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) to correct reports linking the visit to the bombings and efforts by pro-administration sectors to change the Constitution.

"The visit has been in the works for the last four weeks and is not related to certain developments in Mindanao," DFA spokesperson Ed Malaya said in response to an interview.

Malaya said a request for a courtesy call on President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was made by Panetta and was received through the US Embassy in Manila a month ago.

On the agenda will be issues raised by both countries in a common campaign against transnational crimes and international terrorism, he added.

Panetta will arrive early Sunday morning from Singapore and will leave in the evening of the same day. —Cynthia D. Balane

Party-list system getting to be ridiculous–Comelec

By Phoebe Namit

THE PARTY-LIST SYSTEM HAS BECOME "ridiculous" and the groups running in the 2010 elections may be required to make public the names of their nominees, according to the Commission on Elections (Comelec).

At a news conference on Wednesday, Comelec Chair Jose Melo said that the poll body would institute stricter rules in issuing certificates of accreditation to party-list groups seeking seats in the House of Representatives.

Citing the law, Melo reiterated that only groups representing marginalized sectors were allowed to take part in the party-list system.

He said there was now such a big number of party-list groups that "we cannot distinguish which among them really represent the marginalized sectors."

"The party-list system is getting ridiculous," he said, adding in jest: "Who knows, we may have a party-list group of reporters covering the Comelec next year."

Preventing abuse

Melo said that in order to prevent the abuse of the party-list system, the Comelec was studying the possibility of requiring public disclosure of each group's nominees.

He said the poll body might also require the groups to name their nominees as partylist and other elective positions also, but that "it would be better if they do that voluntarily."

He added, however, that the Comelec could only penalize the winning party-list groups, and not the nominees.

According to Comelec spokesperson James Jimenez, the law does not compel party-list groups to disclose their nominees.

"But the law does not say either that they cannot be required to do so," he said.

Critics have assailed the Comelec for its perceived failure to safeguard the party-list system.

They said this failure had allowed certain persons with questionable backgrounds—such as Ang Kasanggga's Marilou Aseron, a sister of President Macapagal-Arroyo husband, and Bonna's Bonito Salgueza, a retired general suspected of ordering the killing of activists—to become party-list lawmakers.

10 Lakas-Kampi members to join NPC, claims Danding son

By Lolit B. Solmerin

A "SUBSTANTIAL" NUMBER OF RULING Lakas-Kampi CMD party members have signified their intention to join the Nationalist People's Coalition, according to Dasmariñas Rep. Mark Cojuangco.

Cojuangco said members of other parties were also quitting their groups to join the supposedly "senatorial" NPC, the party founded by his father, business tycoon Eduardo Cojuangco.

Many local officials have also taken their oath as NPC members, he added.

According to Cojuangco, the Lakas-Kampi CMD would-be turncoats are not yet ready to make their decision to be with the NPC public, but stressed that their number was significant.

"It is substantial... Substantial is like 10," he told reporters.

He named Laguna Rep. Edgar San Luis, who is listed as an independent in the roster of Bagumbayan website, as among the new NPC members. He said San Luis also brought four candidates with him.

Win some, lose some

But Cojuangco said there were probably NPC members who would also leave the party. One of the most prominent is his cousin, Dasmariñas Mayor Gilbert Teodoro, who has left the NPC and has indicated his intention to join the Lakas-Kampi CMD whose endorsement in its presidential candidate he is seeking.

Zambales Rep. Ma. Milagros Magsaysay, a Lakas-Kampi CMD member, said it is expected that some party members would leave to join other groups, particularly if they are not chosen as the party's official candidate.

One of the issues facing Lakas-Kampi after its merger was how to resolve disputes such as when members of Lakas-CMD and of Kampi tend to run for the same local position.

Judge stops hunt for Davao bones

By Nikko Dizon

THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS (CHR) investigation into the so-called Davao death squad has hit a snag after a judge declared a petition requiring it to search war sites for an area where it is believed victims of the group were buried.

"The CHR expects the judiciary to be facilitative within legal bounds rather than obstructionist...Justice cannot have accessories to the culture of impunity," said CHR Chair Leila de Lima in a statement yesterday.

De Lima said Judge Ridgerly Tendik of Davao Regional Trial Court Branch 15 denied the request for a search warrant in an order dated July 7, citing lack of probable cause.

The warrant would have allowed the CHR-led multi-sector task force on the Davao death squad to dig more in over by a dry creek in Barangay Sirib where a human leg bone was unearthed.

The area is near an apiculture plantation owned by a former policeman whose human bones were discovered earlier. That area behind the Gold Cup Polong Ranch was covered by a search warrant issued by Manila RTC Judge Rosendo Lopez.

"The fact that the initial search yielded positive results is an indication that the task force and the PNP-ITG (Philippine National Police-Special Investigation Task Group) team acted in good, solid faith and that the ongoing search is not at all a fishing expedition," De Lima said.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, July 10, 2009
Ordinary Time

(At Nonbling)
Gospel:

Jesus said to his disciples, "Look, I send you out like sheep among wolves. You must be clever as snakes and innocent as doves. Be on your guard with respect to people, for they will hand you over to their courts and flog you in their synagogues. You will be brought to trial before rulers and kings because of me, and so you may witness to them and the pagans. When they arrest you and hand you over, do not worry about what you are to say and how you are to say it; whatever you are to say will be given you at that hour, for it is not you who will speak, but it will be the Spirit of your Father who will speak.

"Brothers will hand over brother to death, and a father his child, children will rise against parents and have them put to death. Everyone will hate you because of me, but whoever stands firm to the end will be saved. When they persecute you in one town, flee to the next. I tell you truly, you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

Commentary:

When Jacob and his family moved to Egypt, Joseph sent his jealous brothers to reassure them that they had nothing to fear. Joseph promised them that his family has come to settle there. But Joseph may not tell about how they would adapt. It is true when they are invited to be of service, rewards may not always come. Sometimes, they are persecuted instead. Joseph knows that he is only paid for evil.

As human nature is so disposed. There is only shame in being treacherous, or not willing to have something to do. We don't realize much for this reason. Whatever we do, let's do it well. Whatever employment God in his providence has afforded for us, let's adapt ourselves to it until he takes us from it. Let's not be ashamed of common courses, thereby shame of a high one. If we wish to attain to any end, or those of our children, then let us ask for ourselves, and for them, great things. But if we have sufficient bread and shelter, let us therein rest and be content with our lot in life.

'Shabu market' operator, wife get life

From page A1

prise National Police's Anti-Illegal Drugs Special Operations Task Force.

Besides meting out the life terms, the court ordered Boontang to pay P10 million in fines and his wife, P5 million.

Sheryl was also convicted of a separate charge of drug possession as she was found with 5.1 g (grams) of illegal narcotics when the Mayuyuyo Compound was raided by the police task force in February 2006.

3-lap prosecutors hailed

Junior Secretary Agnes Devanadera praised the Department of Justice prosecutors on the case for resisting tremendous pressure.

"Today we have a triumph of justice and it is very significant that the prosecutors who performed very well are line lawyers," Devanadera said. "The vigilance of the community contributed to the success."

The prosecutors are assistants Ocilo Amor Robles, Elizabeth Perdiz, Edna Wilday-Valdez and Maribel Bidaligan.

Devanadera said the prosecutors had received threatening text messages and had told them they were being followed home. She added that no reprisals before attempts.

The latter, chair of the Dangerous Drugs Board, said the conviction "sends a strong message that the three pillars of enforcement, prosecution and judiciary are working together to hit the drug peddlers in full force as we got our act together against the scourge of illegal drugs for the sake of the Filipino youth."

Sobbing

Following the promulgation, Boontang, surrounded by his escorts from the Station 4 Bureau of Investigation, told reporters that the decision was unfair.

"They were influenced by the media. What happened to me was related by politics," he said.

Sheryl could not even put up from her seat after the announcement of the life sentence and was covering her face. She was sobbing long after the court worker had admonished.

"I told this (was) the truth. It's not supposed to be here. I had nothing to do with what they charged me of," she said in an interview.

Judge Reyeres ordered the immediate imprisonment of the convicts at the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology in Muntinlupa.

The judge also ordered that all the illegal money and assets seized by the police raid, some in connection with the case be turned over to the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency for proper disposition.

Testimony credible, convincing

Boontang's conviction, the trio said in an interview, rested mainly on the testimony of primary witness Police, which was also corroborated by other witnesses presented by the prosecuting lawyers.

In his decision, the judge said Police's testimony was "straightforward, clear, convincing and credible."

Police was able to detail how Boontang "procured shabu from his suppliers and how the shabu was actually delivered by the suppliers of Boontang; how the drugs were weighed, repacked and how the shabu was distributed to the 'tomatadores' or the persons who sold them subsidiary or retail in the shanties located inside the compound," the decision said.

The primary witness also assured the court how the proceeds were collected from the peshers and how these were dispatched by Boontang to a bank.

The court also took into account the fact that Boontang was also proven to be the owner of the 2,000-square-meter Mayuyuyo Compound.

In his defense, Boontang claimed that while he owned the compound, he had nothing to do with the drug operations there.

200 NBI agents

Raul Lizada, commander of the NBI Anti-Illegal Drugs Task Force, said the conviction of Boontang and his wife was a resounding victory in the fight against the illegal trafficking of drugs.

"We are happy that we are instrumental in making it possible," Lizada said.

The couple were detained at the NBI following their arrest in 2006.

Convoy

At least 200 heavies agents provided security for the couple when they were taken out of the NBI compound in Manila for their periodical visits of their case in the Pasig Regional Trial Court.

A convoy of at least 24 vehicles took the couple to the court. The heavies were created Task Force Gerry to consider protection for the couple.

Apart from NBI agents, members of the Special Weapons and Tactics and Highway Patrol Group served as augmentees when trying judges were also deployed on search buildings, apart from agents assigned to secure court premises.

'Victim'

A few hours before he left the NBI, Boontang expressed confidence that he would be acquitted. He said he felt he was used and endured as the scapegoat.

"I know that there is not enough evidence against me. I am a victim of a trial by publicity. My case was politicized," Boontang told reporters. "I'm not a drug lord. I'm the victim here."

He denied that he was the operator of the drug shabu, that he caused P800 million from illegal drugs and that he undercover agent scapegoat to counter his enemy.

"This is the worst thing that happened to me," he said, vowing to make up for lost time with his family if he got acquitted. "But if get convicted, I guess I just have to accept it."

With a report from Nestor Pamalaygan

WHAT WENT BEFORE

ON OCT. 10, 2006, POLICE RAIDED THE 2,000-square-meter Mayuyuyo Compound in Pasig. The compound, housing 30 to 40 "shabu" dens, was just built a kilometer away from CIDG-NCR and the headquarters of the Eastern Police District.

Police accused Amin Imam Boontang, owner of the compound, of being the operator of the P500-million shabu market.

Boontang managed to elude authorities, until agents of the National Bureau of Investigation captured him at the Manila Peak Condominium in Makati on Nov. 21, 2006.

An NBI official said Boontang, who was using the name Johnny Dizon, had his own unit soon afterward surgically in Thailand to avoid arrest.

On the same day, Boontang's second wife and alleged accomplice Sheryl Mideva was arrested in the Quang Grand Tower in Makati.

Boontang, who pleaded not guilty to the drug charges, was branded by the state-led Judge Abraham Bonifacio Reyeres Branch 154 of the Pasig Regional Trial Court to let him remain under the custody of the NBI.

Boontang feared that city policemen could be after him. Reyeres granted his request.

Brother, principal witness

In later court hearings, Boontang's brother and alleged former right-hand man Jomer Police testified that Boontang had also supplied illegal drugs in Quiapo, Manila; Tandang Sora, Quezon City; Tujung, Bulacan; Cavite; Cebu; and the cities of Dipolog and Mariveles in Mindanao.

In December 2006, the Court of Appeals granted the petition of the Anti-Money Laundering Council for a 20-day freeze on Boontang's bank accounts at Equitable PCI Bank (EPCIB) and Planters Development Bank amid claims the name of Gabriel de Medellin, an EPCIB bank manager, Medellin had illegally been hired by Boontang to launder his drug money.

In January, May and October 2008, Reyeres and Judge Urbano Zosa of the Pasig RTC Branch 166 separately convicted a number of those arrested in the 2006 raid of various drug charges and handed down different jail terms, including life imprisonment.

Bail denied

In August 2009, Reyeres denied Boontang's request to be allowed to post bail.

On March 12 this year, Boontang's petition for the Pasig RTC raid denied that he owned the drug den, claiming that it was actually owned by Police, for business and tenant income.

Boontang said he was a legitimate businessman who owned the property beside the "shabu mansion."

He said Police's allegations were concocted by revenge because Police thought that Boontang was the one who tipped off the police to Mayuyuyo, Inquirer Research/ Sources: Inquirer Archives

Court rules for Pacman in videoke mike lawsuit

By Herman Bordadora

THE COURT OF APPEALS HAS upheld the intellectual property rights case filed by boxing icon Manny Pacquiao against a distributor of videoke microphones which is using unauthorized images bearing the boxer's image and likeness to 2000 without the latter's permission.

The Special 15th Division decision denied Andres Sanchez's petition against the conduct of court proceedings to the violation of boxer-turned-Property Trade charge filed against him by Pacquiao.

Sanchez's GDC Corp. is the distributor of Power Magic Sing videoke microphones. But Pacquiao is an endorser of Power's rival product Extreme Magic Sing.

The case was filed before the Quezon City regional trial court after Sanchez came out with print ads that allegedly indicated Pacquiao's endorsement of Power microphones.

Court records showed that Pilar came out with ads bearing Pacquiao's likeness during a promotional campaign in 2006 where it gave a free VCD copy of Pacquiao's fight with Eric Morales for every purchase of the Pilar videoke microphones.

GDC Corp. and another firm, JAJ Enterprises placed advertisements on TV during Pacquiao's January 2006 bout against Morales.

Court records showed that GDC and JAJ were told that Pacquiao's camp denied the advertisements of the pirates.

RP to see partial eclipse of the sun

By Alexis Puyo

A PARTIAL SOLAR eclipse will be visible in the Philippines on July 22, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said yesterday.

According to the agency's website, the partial eclipse, which means the moon will only cover part of the sun, could be seen from Metro Manila, Catanduanes Island, the cities of Laoag, Tuguegarao, Baguio, Angeles, Puerto Princesa, Legazpi, Naga and General Santos, and the provinces of Bohol, Cebu, Zamboanga, Iloilo and Davao.

Umbral shadow

The eclipse will start in Metro Manila at exactly 9:33:01 a.m. and will achieve maximum visibility at 9:43 a.m. It will end at 11:01:51 a.m.

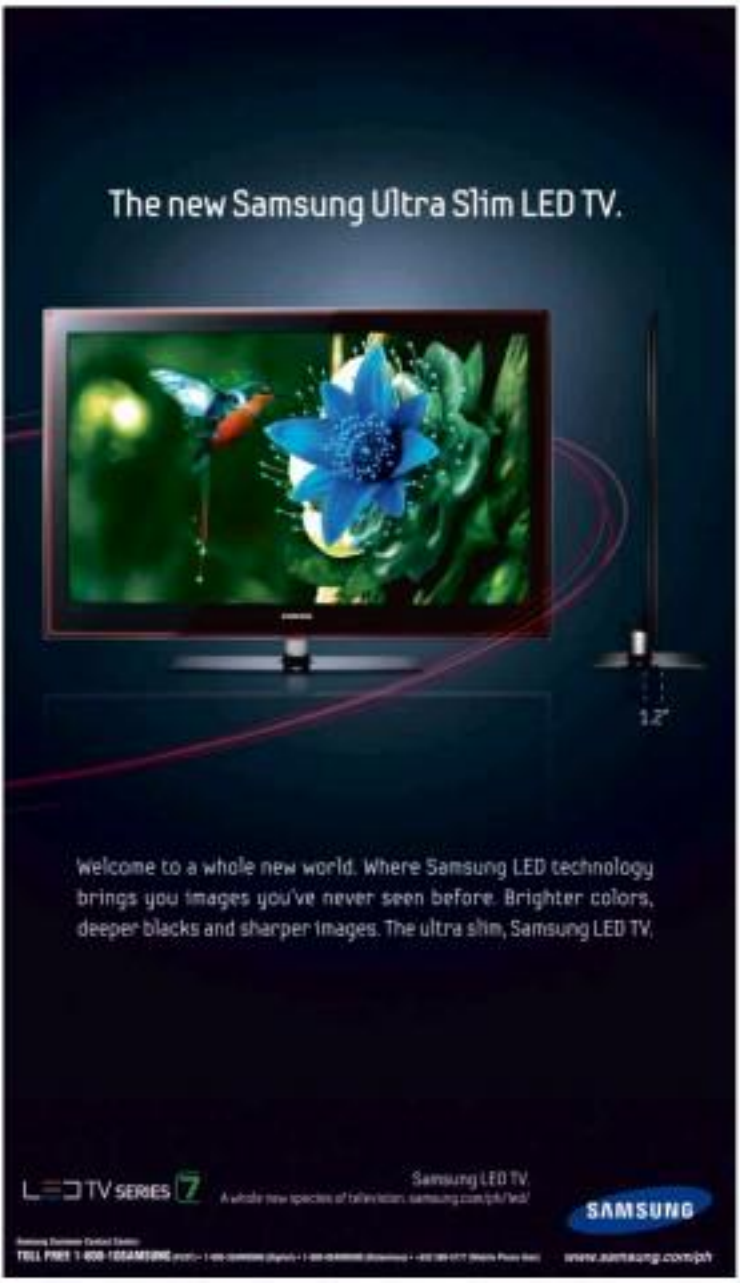
The path of the moon's umbral shadow will pass through areas of eastern Asia and the Pacific Ocean, particularly the countries of India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar (Burma), regions of central China including Shanghai, Russia and Marshall Islands and Kiribati.

Pagasa warned observers not to look directly at the sun during the eclipse without eye protection. They can use sunglasses, smoked glass, X-ray film, photographic film or negatives.

Safe viewing

For further safety, Pagasa suggested viewing the eclipse "indirectly," like by projecting the image of the sun onto a piece of white paper using binoculars (with one of the lenses covered), a telescope or a piece of cardboard with a small hole in it or about one millimeter. This is called a pinhole camera.

A partial solar eclipse occurs when the sun and moon are not exactly in line with each other. Thus, the moon only partially obstructs the sun.



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PILOT CORPORATION

Airlines won't land off Boracay due to new rules

PHILIPPINE AIRLINES AND Cebu Pacific Air have suspended their flights to Caticlan indefinitely, diverting them to Kalibo following landing weight limitations imposed by the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP) as the airport surrounding the resort island of Boracay.

During a hearing with air operators on Wednesday, CAAP also designated Caticlan as a "one-way airport" for all carriers to avoid a repeat of landing accidents that occurred this year.

All takeoffs would be towards the sea while landings would be in the opposite direction on the airport's single runway. A technical redefinition has since effectively shortened the length of the 819-meter runway.

In the two aircraft accidents, both involving Zest Air flights, one plane landed short of the runway on June 13 while another overshot it on June 25.

'Speedy resolutions'

In a statement, Cebu Pacific president and chief executive officer Lance Gokongwei said the airline would continue to work closely with CAAP to find "a speedy resolution to these airport issues, to allow Cebu Pacific to resume flights to Caticlan."

Cebu Pacific affected

Gokongwei said Cebu Pacific's 15 daily round-trip flights and more than 40,000 passengers booked for Caticlan would be affected.

"Runway constraints in by one of the country's most important tourism destinations, Cebu Pacific's low fare service has been integral to the growth and development of the island's tourism industry and has increased its accessibility to both local and foreign tourists," he said.

In a separate statement, PAL said the diversion to Kalibo, some 90 kilometers southeast of Caticlan, would affect PAL Express's 11 daily flights from Manila and one from Cebu City.

Both PAL and Cebu Pacific said they would bus their Boracay-bound passengers from Kalibo to Caticlan for free. From Caticlan, it is a short motorboat ride to Boracay.

PAL passengers have been advised to connect in reservations hotline (8318888), any ticket office or authorized travel agent for changes in flight bookings.

Cebu Pacific said affected passengers may call (632) 7020888 and (032) 2300888 or visit its website at www.cebupacificair.com for information.

21,000 movements

The Caticlan airport, officially known as Godofredo P. Ramos Airport, oversaw more than 21,000 aircraft movements in 2008, handling more than 761,000 passengers and more than 3,200 metric tons of cargo.

The airport is the seventh busiest in the Philippines and the third busiest in western Visayas, according to CAAP.

Other airlines will continue to service Caticlan, notably Zest Air and Seair.

At least half a million tourists visit the white sand beaches of Boracay every year, according to industry estimates. Jerome Aning, with AFP report

Nuke waste disposal no big deal–expert

By Lala B. Salaverria

DISPOSING OF NUCLEAR WASTE IS NOT the dangerous exercise that opponents of nuclear power are making it out to be, according to a visiting Swiss expert.

Dr. Ian McKinley said that fears about the dangers of nuclear waste disposal stem from a lack of knowledge about it.

McKinley spoke to reporters at a forum hosted by Pangasinan Rep. Mark Cojuangco, who has filed a bill proposing the rehabilitation and operation of the mothballed Bataan Nuclear Power Plant.

McKinley is president of the Swiss-based McKinley Consulting, which provides radioactive waste management and other technical services to different countries.

The Bataan facility, which was built during the Ferdinand Marcos dictatorship, has been mothballed for two decades and was never operated.

Environment groups and groups of residents of Bataan province are opposing the Cojuangco move to revive the 620W and have been mounting street protests against it.

McKinley, who said that he lived just 5 kilometers from a nuclear power plant, noted that opponents of nuclear power "promote [waste disposal] as the most dangerous area of adopting the decision to go nuclear."

Less waste

But he said nuclear power produces less waste than fossil fuels. A nuclear-sized plant using three million tons of coal will generate seven million tons of carbon dioxide, but a year of operating a nuclear power plant of roughly the same size would only produce about 24 tons of used fuel, McKinley said.

Waste produced by nuclear plants are so small that makes it easy to store them, he said.

Though technically speaking, nuclear waste is very difficult to handle, the technology exists to make sure that those can be stored and disposed of without posing harm to people or the environment, McKinley said.

He said one problem is that there is poor communication about the safety of handling nuclear wastes. There is a need to improve dialogues with stakeholders and emphasize the range of safe options available, he said.

Nuclear wastes can be disposed of by storing them underground at a certain depth or storing them in facilities, McKinley said.

Noting that nuclear waste disposal can be an expensive undertaking, he said the Philippines could look into the possibility of storing a waste disposal facility with a neighboring country in order to cut down the cost.

Nuclear waste disposal can cost about $300,000 to $5 million per ton in the United States, but in Finland, the cost is 30 times cheaper, said Cojuangco.

RICE IMPORT OVERPRICE

Palace hit for clearing agri execs

By Michael Lim Ubac

SENATORS LOREN LEGARDA AND Miriam Defensor yesterday accused Malacañang of prematurely clearing agriculture officials linked to the purchase of allegedly overpriced Vietnam rice.

In a statement, Legarda asked whether the Executive was trying to whitewash the controversy ending after Malacañang appointed to have accepted the explanations of Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap, who had said that "there is no such thing as overpriced rice."

"It is not for Malacañang to absolve the Department of Agriculture (DA) over its reported purchase of 'overpriced' rice from Vietnam totaling 1.5 million metric tons," said Legarda.

"In the DA is under the Office of the President, any pronouncement by the Palace that the deal was above board would be self-serving or, worse, zone serves to our people, rightly or wrongly, as an attempt to whitewash the matter," she said.

The senator noted that the DA had been "emphatic" that the low prices of Vietnam rice as quoted by the news value-creative Reuters had no basis.

"But let us see if this is true, during a public hearing of the Senate committee on food and agriculture of which I am the chair," she said.

"Thus, it's not like the issue can be laid to rest on the basis of the DA's findings. Let us hold a public hearing so we can see what the truth really is on this matter which may involve corruption in the amount of billions of pesos. It also involves food security since being the basic staple of our people," she said.

Roxas, for his part, filed a resolution on Wednesday calling for an inquiry into the "exorbitant" of the rice imported this year by the Philippine government from Vietnam.

In Senate Resolution No. 1161, Roxas pointed out that the DA had contracted the importation of 1.5 million metric tons of rice with a supplier named Vietnam Southern Food Corporation through a government-to-government bidding on December 15, 2008.

ALTERNATIVE CAPITAL

Pampanga seen as gov't seat in case of big quake

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—IF METRO Manila, the capital region and the main urban center, were to be hit by a 7.2-magnitude earthquake and the damage as severe as projections in a 2004 study showed, Pampanga could serve as the country's temporary seat of government and business.

Dr. Renato Solidum, chief of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs), outlined this scenario in a briefing he gave on disaster risk management before the Pampanga Chamber of Commerce and Industry on Wednesday.

The briefing, timed with the anniversary of the July 16, 1990 earthquake in Central Luzon, was aimed at raising awareness of disaster preparedness and reduction.

Ghost of 1990 quake

The 1990 temblor, with a magnitude of 7.8 and its epicenter in Rizal, Nueva Ecija, killed 1,280 people in Pangasinan, Nueva Ecija and Baguio City.

"Pampanga can generate the consistency for the national government and business when that disaster strikes," Solidum told an audience consisting of Metrobank members, local officials, directors of regional government agencies, police and military officials.

A 7.2-magnitude earthquake is the worst case scenario from among 18 scenarios scenarios if the West Valley fault system in Metro Manila, one of the country's active fault zones, should move, said Solidum.

Fault zones are fractures within the Earth's crust which are the usual location of earthquakes.

The West Valley fault system—formerly known as the Marikina Valley fault system—Eto Klaustrent east of the center of Metro Manila—has moved four times in recent centuries at the rate of once every 200 to 400 years.

"If the latest link of 200 years is used, it can move in our generation," Solidum said.

He said that unlike typhoons, the occurrence of earthquakes cannot be predicted. But its location can be mapped out. Its magnitude estimated and damaging effects processed, he said.

That's why it is important for communities, schools and work places to be in a state of readiness, Solidum said.

Another anticipated scenario is the occurrence of an earthquake in the South China Sea, which could trigger a tsunami in the form of 10-meter-high seawaves along the mouth of the Pampanga River.

Those scenarios were mapped out in the study "Earthquake Impact Reduction Study for Metropolitan Manila" conducted between 2002 and 2004 by the Phivolcs, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority and the Japan International Cooperation Agency.

According to Solidum, a 7.2-magnitude earthquake would kill 33,000 people and injure 114,000, destroy 175,000 houses and cause damage to 340,000 more, flatten 86 percent of 10- to 30-story buildings and 34 percent of 30- to 60-story structures and damage 28 to 33 percent of public buildings.

Pampanga is being considered as an alternative seat of government and business rather than its neighbor Bataan because the latter is closer to Metro Manila and could also experience stronger intensity from an earthquake in the capital region, Solidum said.

Although Pampanga does not lie on any active fault, the province could experience ground shaking and aftershocks if an earthquake should occur in Metro Manila.

Danny Dayday, Inquirer Central Luzon

Corruption is top issue for next president, says survey

By Dixie L. Lucas

CORRUPTION IS THE BIGGEST ISSUE THAT the country's next president will face, according to a new survey by Nielsen Media Research.

An average of 54 percent of respondents believe that corruption will be the most important problem to tackle in 2010, according to the pilot study conducted by Nielsen among commuters on the Metro Rail Transit in Metro Manila.

This opinion was most pronounced among respondents 18 to 29 years of age, or 58 percent of respondents.

Respondents aged 30 and above were marginally less concerned about corruption, each 50 percent of them saying that this was the most important issue for the next administration to tackle.

The purpose of the pilot study was to evaluate the effectiveness of mobile phones as survey tools that can be used to gauge respondents' awareness of current issues.

The bulk of answers given on the SMS service are white- and blue-collar workers.

Nielsen executive director Jay Rimban said the respondents agreed to answer the survey through a free mobile phone query and reply scheme, which rewarded respondents with free mobile phone "load" credits upon completion of the 10-item questionnaire.

According to the survey, the economy will be the second most pressing problem for the next administration, with an average 37 percent of respondents citing this issue.

Again, younger respondents were slightly more concerned about the economy, with 27 percent of them saying it should be a priority for the next administration. Only 19 percent of older respondents agreed with this.

An average of 15 percent of respondents cited education as the most important issue, followed by 12 percent for peace and order, and 2 percent for the environment.

Respondents were also asked whether they were aware of the issues surrounding reported attempts to revise the Constitution.

Nineteen percent of MRT riders aged 18 to 29 said they were "strongly aware of the issues," while 43 percent considered themselves "partially aware."

The situation was reversed for older MRT riders, with 37 percent saying they were "strongly aware" and 39 percent being "partially aware."

On the average, 65 percent of respondents said that they were either strongly or partially aware about issues surrounding Charter change moves, an average of 21 percent from both age brackets said they were either "hardly aware" or "totally unaware."

Nielsen, which undertook the survey on its own, said the survey design was flexible and can be completed in three to seven days, compared to several weeks needed for more traditional survey methods.

Later editions will have as many as 300 respondents, the company said.

Being a new survey with a small sample, the margin of error was plus or minus 10 percent.

GMA OKs gun amnesty

By Christian F. Esguerra

OWNERS OF UNLICENSED FIREARMS have the rest of October this year to register their weapons, and ahead of the May 2010 elections.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has issued Executive Order 817 granting a "final period of amnesty" from Oct. 1 to 31.

"All loose firearms (rebels), be they newly expired firearms and/or unexpired firearms, shall be encouraged and be given an opportunity to obtain the required firearms licenses," the President said in the order dated July 7.

"This would reduce the chance of loose firearms being used in election related offenses which may lead to the realization of a peaceful, orderly and credible electoral exercise in 2010," she added.

Deputy presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said last month was long enough for gun owners to register their firearms.

"They will take advantage of the amnesty if they really want to," he said.

The order acknowledged that "the proliferation of loose firearms has constituted a critical obstacle in the fight against criminality."

Unlicensed firearms

It cited statistics from the Philippine National Police showing that there were 1,140,277 unlicensed firearms in the country as of May this year.

Of the number, 550,324 had expired licenses, while 15.6% were in the possession of "known" groups, and 7,720 were in the hands of communist rebels. The remaining 529,558 weapons belonged to the general population.

The President noted that 85 percent of all crimes committed with firearms from 2004 to 2008 involved loose guns.

She said the government hoped to "reduce the number of loose firearms by an average of three percent a month through aggressive continuing law enforcement actions, to include a general amnesty."

The order called for "synchronized" efforts among the PNP Armed Forces of the Philippines, Bureau of Customs, National Bureau of Investigation, and other law enforcement agencies "to ensure the success of the intensified campaign against loose firearms."

Wanted Chinese swindler nabbed

A CHINESE NATIONAL WHO IS WANTED by authorities in Beijing for fraud and swindling has been arrested by immigration agents and will face deportation proceedings, the immigration bureau said yesterday.

Arrested on July 3 by operatives of the Bureau of Immigration's intelligence division was Gao Zhen Kun, a.k.a. Sun Zhongping, 44. He was nabbed over to the newly created BI-Interpol unit tasked to run after Foreign fugitives.

Gao was collared inside an apartment near the MOA mall in Sta. Mesa, Manila, and was brought to the immigration jail in Bicutan where he is now detained pending deportation proceedings.

Immigration Commissioner Marcelino Libanan described the Chinese fugitive's arrest as another proof of the immigration bureau's resolve to cleanse the country of wanted foreign criminals who have sought refuge here to evade prosecution for their crimes.

Embassy request

Associate Commissioner Enrique Galang Jr. said the arrest of Gao was made on the request of the Chinese embassy in Manila.

Galang said the embassy's police attache informed the bureau that Gao had used a tampered Chinese passport under the name of Sun Zhongping when he entered the country last June 19 and was issued a 59-day tourist visa upon arrival at the airport.

"His passport was already cancelled by the Chinese government, thus he is now an undocumented alien," Galang added.

According to Hazel Rimbo, the bureau's intelligence chief, Gao was charged with fraud before the Changchun Provincial Public Security Bureau in Jilin, China, in April last year.

Rimbo said the fugitive gained notoriety as a professional swindler as he was able to entice many of his victims to invest their money in an enterprise that turned out to be fictitious.

Rimbo also said that Gao had it settled in and out of the Philippines as soon as he managed to obtain a 59-day visa. He was able to get his original passport and that his last arrival was on Feb. 20 this year when he used his allowed passport.

Mike Romualdez, 59

MIGUEL J. ROMUALDEZ III, SON OF Makati executive editor Enrique J. Romualdez, died Wednesday evening, a victim of lung cancer. He was 59.

He is survived by his wife Ma. Socorro Romualdez and children Blanca and Jose Mario; parents Enrique F. Romualdez and Soledad J. Romualdez; siblings and in-laws Enrique Jr. and Ellen, Antonio and Lorna, Eduardo and Wilhelmina, Socorro and Jesus, and Ma. Soledad and Randy Abellera.

The body lies in state in Alphonsus Mary di Liguori mortuary chapel in Magallanes Village, Makati City.

Interment is scheduled on Sunday at the Loyola Memorial Park in Parañaque after a 9 a.m. Mass.

"Mike," as he was fondly called, worked for the National Food Authority. He retired in 1987 to set up a tea retail business.

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Boratong's conviction squelches talk of P20-M payoff

By Beverly T Mariñas

JAIL TERM REINFORCES

conviction yesterday quieted down rumors that resident earlier alleging that money was being offered to obtain the acquittal of the accused.

A day before the promulgation of the drug case against Boratong, talk was rife that Abraham Borromeo, presiding judge of Branch 154 of the Pasig Regional Trial Court, was offered P20 million in exchange for the acquittal of Boratong.

But the following morning, such reports yesterday ended the mind of the public was being conditioned to believe that bribery was involved should be be convicted.

"Why are they making the public think that money passed hands if now I'm acquitted," Boratong told reporters hours after being freed in his Cainta hometown.

Borromeo, however, said that several people acting as emissaries of Boratong had visited approached him in an attempt to work a favorable ruling.

He said his office door was always open and several people who broke his in committee would stop by to say, "Hi" and in the process mention Boratong's case.

"Then there's one lawyer, maybe you can look into Boratong's case," said then JR Jail Bureau "You know, don't think mean that statement because Boratong's case will be decided on the merits. If the case is strong then he will be acquitted," he said.

Borromeo said the amount of the offer ranged from P10 million to more P50 million.

Warning to Boratong

The judge said that he warned Boratong in open court that he had been hearing rumors implicating him in bribery attempts.

"He promised. I've been hearing news that I have been paid by you. I will tell you I have not received nor asked a cent from you. Tell your associates to stop their attempts because they are just wasting your money," Borromeo said, recalling what he told the accused.

AFP told: Stop talk, get bombers; Teodoro alarmed

Front page A1

"If it were new intelligence information and still candidate's intel, such statements should have not been made but I will wait for their explanation," Teodoro said.

The military's National Capital Region Command (NCRCom), headed by Palec, declared a red alert on Wednesday to prevent a repetition of the Black Monday of bombings that took place in parts of Maguindanao, killing eight people.

Gilroy interlligence report, Palec told Bush specialists from the Abu Sayyaf bandit group, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI)—which is linked to the Rajah Solaiman Movement group—had been tracked to the capital.

'More action, less talk'

But Teodoro said Move Mindanao Sept. 11 is sufficient reason to declare a state of emergency. "Bombings cause panic among the public.

"My advice to them is this: should do their job, double time, triple time. More action, less talk," he said.

"Sufficient to create panic," Teodoro said.

He was referring to a supposed plan by some administration-line United people to cut short the term of AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Victor Ibrado and replace him with Army Chief Lt. Gen. Delfin Bangit, a trusted ally of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Bautista for comment, NCR-Com spokesperson Maj. Carlo Bautista said the unit had not been informed that only the state, it Terrorism Council (ATC) would talk about bombing matters.

Palec also said the NCRCom remained secret alert.

Palec also said we like that the suspected bombers to the Mamasapano, Maguindanao, military camps and the Congress, where Mr Arroyo is due to deliver her State of the Nation Address on July 27.

Only from Ermita

Mr Arroyo has designated Ermita as the government's sole spokesperson on the security situation in a move from Secretary Gregg Bernardo claimed would ensure a smooth flow of information.

"We agreed that all the authoritative announcements on the situation like this should come from Executive Secretary Ermita, and from no one else in order to avoid false messages," Bernardo said.

Asked if the move was to effect controlling the disclosure of security information, Undersecretary Daisy Oliver said, "I just wanted to have one spokesperson on security matters. There are sensitive matters."

Undersecretary Anthony Golez, deputy presidential spokesperson, said the people in Metro Manila "are safe, especially now that the campaign against bombs is intensified."

"Everybody is enjoined to cooperate because in the end we are responsible. It's a shared responsibility," he said but added that the people should be "prepared for the worst."

He said anything was possible. He "given the criminals a little distance."

Golez said the authorities were on heightened alert to avert a spillover of the bombings into Metro Manila.

'Heightened alert'

Bautista asking Army to realize reconnaissance, the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) yesterday lowered its alert status to "heightened alert" from a day after declaring a full alert.

The NCRPO director, Chief Supt. Roberto Rosales, said he ordered the downgrade after verifying with police intelligence units that there was no imminent threat to Metro Manila.

A full alert means all police personnel should be on duty, while 75 percent are on duty under a heightened alert, he said.

Rosales claimed he raised the alert to "full," or highest level, as it pan. Bautista-like,—in effect contradicting his own public information office that said in a press release Wednesday afternoon that a full alert had been declared as early as 8 a.m. that day.

The NCRPO press release re-

Local oil firms tighten security

LOCAL OIL COMPANIES have put in place all the necessary security measures could repeated threats of terror bombings in Metro Manila.

In a briefing, Roberto Ravago, vice president for communications of Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp., said that even prior to the supposed threats, Shell had already strengthened security to its stores offices and service stations.

"Our security (measures) are all in place," Ravago said, adding that other oil firms were taking similar precautions.

Ravago said that Petron Corp. and Chevron Philippines have confident that terrorists would find it hard to attack the Pandacan oil depot, the company's main oil terminal, because of its tight security.

The Pandacan depot supplies 50 percent of the country's total demand for fuel, 100 percent of lubricants requirements and 40 percent of chemical needs, including three of strategic importance.

It also serves the fuel requirements of vital industries such as transport, manufacturing, shipping and power generation. —Jerry R. Rivera

JDV sure on Palace martial law plan if Con-ass not in place

Front page A4

second, fallback position is to declare martial law," De Venecia told a Manila Polo Club audience that included ambassadors from Germany, Italy, Indonesia, Thailand, India and the Philippines.

De Venecia warned that, strengthened by martial law, the administration could then proceed with the Con-ass and eliminate any remaining opposition to Charter change.

The Pangasinan lawmaker, a close Arroyo ally until he was overthrown as Speaker in a Palace-backed House coup in 2008, hammered on the issue that there is doubt on when he spoke to hotpants editors and reporters in a dinner in Tondo.

Reacting to allegations by De Venecia and other critics, Undersecretary Anthony Golez, deputy presidential spokesperson, said in a briefing that all these claims about martial law were part of a "large propaganda" against the administration.

"The purpose of propaganda against this administration is

Like Marcos

De Venecia said the "conservatives reasonably could be convinced under martial law if the (Con-ass) will not come about (later this month) or in its giant."

Holding a countdown accurately under a regime of martial law as Ferdinand Marcos declared in the reason for their martial law or emergency rule," he said.

De Venecia said he believed that the administration would then be able to get the three-fourths vote "under the aegis of martial law."

Marcos declared martial law in 1972 toward the end of his term, and then engineered a constitutional revamp that allowed him to rule indefinitely with emergency powers and with no elections legislature.

"So, the convening of a constituent assembly can be a reasoned convening but without the trouble in August or in September, October or even November under a shield of martial law," De Venecia said.

Mo-ol scenario

De Venecia said this scenario could be applicable to the elections in 2010, adding that Mr Arroyo's allies could simply insert a provision to hold the elections in 2012, instead.

"So, the most innocuous term personally and congratulations that there will be elections in 2010 and that there will be no martial law," De Venecia said.

He said Mr Arroyo must also instruct "her lieutenants in Congress not to push anymore for holding Con-ass in late July or August" and that no second move by the Executive, including shifting a shift to parliamentary government, shall be done through an elected constituent convention to be convened after the 2010 first presidential election.

Cabinet hawks

He told hawks in the Cabinet were already pushing for martial law to unify in the "last months of 2009 until the first quarter 2010."

At the dinner with the businessmen, De Venecia also spoke of how Mr Arroyo came close to declaring martial law before but he gave the impression that she "backed off" in 2007, because nothing again with the hotpants. He corrected the year when it supposedly happened.

It happened in 2005

De Venecia said the plan to impose martial law had actually been hatched in 2005 when Mr Arroyo's presidency was facing widespread discontent brought about by allegations of poll fraud and corruption.

He said that actually happened not during the November 2007 Peninsula Manila siege but in the height of the "Hello Garci" videotapping scandal in 2005.

But De Venecia stood by with the rest of the story he gave at Teodoro's dinner.

Despite the apparent attempt of Palec, De Venecia said he is not worried about that Mr Arroyo would resort to drastic measures again to stay in power beyond 2010.

Palace lashes back

Mentioning how the hotel was at center accusing Mr Arroyo of using the bombings in Mindanao as a pretext to impose martial law.

The government goes about its job of winning down the republic and protecting the public, while accuse be confused on the attempts of some people to profit politically from these incidents," Golez said.

"As with their other big lies, this purported coup d'etat is collapsing under its own absurd pretenses—Senator Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and Jose Avelino Reta Guingona—told Dethat he had been hearing rumors implicating him in bribery attempts.

"He promised. I've been hearing news that I have been paid by you. I will tell you I have not received nor asked a cent from you. Tell your associates to stop their attempts because they are just wasting your money," Borromeo said, recalling what he told the accused.

Sept. Reginald Mamuchi, chief of the NCRPO Public Information Office, said the press release was based on a memo from Camp Crame to step up security measures.

No Malacañang order

Rosales said he learned the alert after he talked with his intelligence unit and with General Palec. He said Major "was only telephoned" when Palec spoke about a possible terrorism in Metro Manila.

Rosales denied Malacañang gave the order to scale down the alert so as not to cause panic. He said checkpoints and police visibility had been increased to ensure public safety.

Police Undersecretary Rosalio Bautista, AFP spokesperson, said there was no reason for alert status to be reduced because of a recent attack in Metro Manila was not yet confirmed.

But he also said: "There is always a need for heightened security. We can't take those things for granted." With a report from Dona Pazzibugan

President cancels Cotabato visit; churches hold Masses for peace

Front page A1

first mass held a grandstand at the provincial headquarters of the Philippine National Police in Tagum City in Davao del Norte before dawn yesterday.

The blast on a pavement inside the PNP barracks at Sharon gay Silvestre Village located just down from sleep but caused no injuries, police said.

Oliver Tadeda, director of the Philippine Information Agency in Central Mindanao, confirmed the cancelation of the President's trip, but said the exact reasons of the reasons for the move.

Bishop Jose Colin Bagaforo, auxiliary bishop of Cotabato who was attending the annual conference of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines in Baguio City said he had been told that Ms Arroyo's visit had been rescheduled for next week.

Mindanalung's Media Association and Solidcon Office issued photographers that the President's trip to Cotabato including stops in Cagayan de Oro, Iligan and Lepto had been called off.

Datuk Ismael Ibrahim, chair of the Muslim Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said the Muslim Cotabato Chamber of Industry planned to join the protest churches of businessmen today.

Archbishop Orlando Quevedo will officiate at the special Mass at noon tomorrow and he prayer at the Cotabato Cathedral.

Bishop Quevedo was asked to cross red cloth to represent the blood shed by innocent victims of the bombings.

"This is not stop of expressing condemnation and we pray a complete stop to this violence," Bagaforo said.

Tough gov't response

In Manila, Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. yesterday blamed the government for its failure to stop the bombings.

"I'm saddened by this development where the people of Mindanao are being made the guinea pigs of whatever is the plan of those who might be behind the bombings," said Pimentel, a native of Cagayan de Oro City at the weekly Kuralen sa Senado news forum.

"If the bombings continue, it means that the government not really in control of the situation and that it is the principal duty of the President," he said.

Pimentel called on Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro and PNP Director General Jesus Verzosa to improve their counterattacks.

"They cannot just say 'we are already doing the development.' That is a very lame excuse I find of response," he said, meaning that government should have an assurance to the public.

"The government must send the message that it is on top of the situation. It is running after the culprits and soon there will be people behind the bar because they are running after the bombers without any respite," the senator said.

Pouring gasoline on fire

Pimentel also assailed the armed forces of the Philippines for saying that the bombings would cease in Muslim.

"There is no absolute assurance," he said. "Instead of doubting the efficacy of these bombings, actually it's like pouring gasoline on fire."

Sen. Alan Peter Cayetano said the Senate committee on national defense and security should press the military, police and intelligence community "not only to tell us what the security situation is but to show us how they're using their intelligence funds."

How did you know?

"You're saying that they (terrorists) will now strike here and there. You know about them, so why can't you stop them? Where did your intelligence come from? What good (can we derive from) succeeding (Defense Minister Rafael) Ileto (in) telling us that the terrorists have already left Manila? How did you know?" he said. With reports from D Burgos in and Princess L Ilas, Judy Quirao and Orlando Dinoy, Inquirer Mindanao

Malacañang says gov't ready to deliver food

By TJ Burgonio

MALACAÑANG YESTERDAY lamented the trembling reopening of the United Nations's food distribution to persons displaced by fighting in Mindanao and said that the government was prepared to do the job.

"It's regrettable that the distribution was suspended because of the terrorist acts," Undersecretary Anthony Golez, deputy presidential spokesperson, said in a briefing.

Undersecretary Gay Oliva, deputy spokesperson on economic matters, said the suspension might have an "impact on the people's confidence" in Mindanao, but said the government was helpless about this.

"But having said that, the GIA makes its own decisions. The important question is, are we in a position to carry on without the UN?" he said.

The World Food Programme (WFP) on Thursday suspended for a week the resettlement of 200,000 displaced persons in camps affected by the bombings, pending an audit the delivery of food provisions to evacuees.

Golez, however, said that the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) was prepared to assume the job of food distribution.

"The UN initiative is very helpful but the DSWD is ready also. We have the NDCC (National Disaster Coordinating Council), which DSWD is part of it," he said.

But he conceded: "Of course the UN's help is very much welcome. I think the most appropriate activity right now is for us to make Mindanaons safe not only for the UN workers but for the entire population in that area."

Oliva agreed with Golez and said that the government was in a position to carry on the food distribution.

"I'm not privy to the budget allocation of the DSWD so hopefully this thing is settled sooner rather than later," he said.

The Oslo-based Norwegian Refugee Council said in its 2009 report that new measures in the Philippines were among the world's most neglected groups in 2008.

An Inquirer reporter who went to encampments outside Cotabato last year was told by displaced people that assistance from the DSWD was only good for a few days, while the WFP provision of one sack of rice per family was good for weeks.

The reporter was also told by international aid workers that while simultaneous war coordinated with government agencies, local NGO partners did the actual delivery after ensuring that recipients were the targeted beneficiaries and that suppliers did not end up in the market.

Cory 'stable, conscious, slowly recovering'

From page A1

Aquino's children and grandchildren got to see her "once in a dress," Hyzmeyer said, adding:

"She was communicative with them. She's happy that people are praying for her."

In a brief response from the family, Aquino's nephew Kelly Lopa said she was "slowly recovering."

Lopa also said the family was thankful for the "prayers and expressions of love" from the Filipino people.

The 76-year-old heroine of the 1986 EDSA People Power Revolution and widow of the assassinated opposition leader Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr. was diagnosed with colon cancer early last year. She has been confined at Makati Medical Center for almost three weeks.

Pamphlet of prayers

As a token of appreciation to those who had been praying for the former President, her friends distributed pocket-sized pamphlets containing the various prayer she used as prayers written by her, which were read at the daily Masses.

The prayers written by Aquino are titled "Thank You, Thank You, Lord!" and "Prayer for a Happy Death." (See Blue on this page.)

The pamphlet also includes her favorite biblical verses, such as this one from Judith 6:5: "O my God, listen to my prayers, the prayer of a widow. You hand guided all that happened then, and all that happened before and after."

Vice President Noli de Castro, IC Builders' leader Bro. Mike Velarde and Metro Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando led the gathering of Aquino's relatives and admirers for the rosary.

Senate Board and Jose Ong, Aquino's agricultural secretary and cultural revives commissioner, respectively, joined the other Aquino Cabinet members and officials who had been in religious attendance since July 1.

More Masses

There will be other special Masses held for Aquino, according to Hyzmeyer.

The Masses scheduled today are those to be offered by President Macapagal-Arroyo and her Cabinet in Malacañang at 10 a.m., and by the Department of Foreign Affairs led by Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo at the DFA auditorium at 4 p.m.

At 6 p.m., Fr. Jose Hagedorn and Fr. Ben Hebron will celebrate a Mass at the Church of the Gesu inside Ateneo de Manila University on Katipunan Avenue, Quezon City.

Masses will also be held at the Chapel of the Sacred Hours of Jesus at the Shaws Floor Mall in Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City, from July 13 to July 17.

Yesterday, Undersecretary Anthony Golez said "Cabinet secretaries, some undersecretaries and the President" would attend the Mass for Aquino at the Palace.

Golez, who is one of Mr. Arroyo's deputy spokespersons, said the Mass was for free.

But Malacañang's media advisory on the President's itinerary today does not include her attendance at the Mass. The Media Accreditation and Relations Office said it had not been informed of her attendance, but did not rule it out.

One with the family

Golez told reporters that by holding the Mass, Ms Arroyo and her Cabinet wanted to pray for Aquino's immediate recovery.

"We are one with the family in terms of offering prayers particularly for ... speedy recovery, and we are with them during this time ... what the family is seeking more strength and more faith in the Lord," he said.

Golez said he was not aware if Aquino's family and other relatives had been invited to the Mass.

Maintaining silence on the President's decision to hold a thanksgiving Mass for Aquino's surgery is in line with the instruction of the President who was then overseas.

Relatives [illegible] reserve the next moves on leaders have been censured since 2005, at the height of the "Hello Garci" election fraud scandal, when Aquino added her voice to calls for Ms Arroyo's resignation. With reports from TJ Burgonio and Cynthia D. Balana

Prayer for a happy death

By Corazon C. Aquino

Almighty God, most merciful Father
You alone know the time
You alone know the hour
You alone know the moment
When I shall breathe my last

So, merciful one each day,
Grant loving Father
To be the best that I can be
To be humble, to be kind,
To be patient, to be true,
To understand and to forgive,
To expect what is evil,
To adore only You.

When the final moment does come
Let me rest inside your arms for long
Let then comfort melt other
Bodied fears from
Your mighty presence
They strengthen me my life
Let then pray for me,
Sin with confidence pray for them,
Hoping that they will always pray
For each other.

Let then know that they made possible
Whatever good I allowed to see and do
And find themselves that our separation
Is just for a short while
Have prepared for our reunion in eternity.

Say I pray for sinners,
You always pray for hope
You always do my salvation.
Thank you for your unconditional love, Amen

SUBIC BAY YACHT CLUB

NOTICE AND AGENDA

OF

ANNUAL MEETING OF REGULAR MEMBERS

Please be informed that the Annual Meeting of the Members of the Subic Bay Yacht Club will be held on Saturday, July 18, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. at the SBYC Clubhouse, Rizal Highway corner Burgos Street, Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Olongapo City. Member's registration begins at 9:00 a.m.

The agenda of the Meeting shall be as follows:

1. Proof of Notice
2. Proof of Quorum
3. Reading and approval of previous minutes
4. Report of the Commodore
5. Appointment of External Auditor
6. Ratification of the acts and resolutions of the Board of Directors and Management in the previous years
7. Election of Directors
8. Adjournment

The Organizational Meeting of the Board of Directors shall be held immediately upon adjournment of the Annual Meeting of the Members.

ATTY. [illegible] PEÑALOSA
Corporate Secretary

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

The usual victims

WHEN IT COMES TO THE LATEST SERIES OF bomb blasts and uncapped bombings, there is no shortage of possible suspects. And they are all the usual ones: political turncoats in the national government's employ may be responsible for those bombs designed to be discovered; Islamic extremists may be behind the all-too-deadly bombings in the cities of Cotabato and Iligan and Jolo. But no one should doubt who the victims are: these too are the usual ones—the poor and the vulnerable.

EDITORIALS

The decision of the United Nations to suspend the distribution of food aid to refugees displaced by ongoing fighting in parts of Mindanao is a painful one to point. Over half a million people, displaced since fighting erupted again last August, when the Supreme Court stopped the signing of the proposed Memorandum of Agreement on ancestral domain between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, have benefited from the distribution of some 13,000 tons of food supplies. But this lifeline has been suspended, as the UN's World Food Program moves to protect its staff who work in Cotabato and Iligan cities.

The suspension must have been a difficult decision to make, but it is an easy one to understand. The WFP must do all it can to ensure the safety of its staff. "The UN in particular is very concerned about staff safety, as we decided to suspend our activities during this week to enable us to understand better the reasons behind these problems," Afghanistan Wasfie, WFP's acting director for the Philippines, told the Associated Press.

But however temporarily it may turn out to be (the WFP is set to review its decision this weekend), the suspension will immediately have an adverse impact on the very people who need all the help they can get: Mindanao's internal refugees. WFP estimates that as many as 340,000 displaced villagers are still living in refugee centers or staying with relatives.

The direst victims of the bombings also form part of that unfortunate category of the poor and vulnerable: commuters, sidewalk vendors, pedestrians. And the last time a major terrorist attack occurred in Metro Manila, the victims were ordinary commuters on the LRT.

It has ever been thus. The ordinary *can* pays the ultimate price, whenever adventurers in government or executives in the hills resort to violence.

Unusual statements

THE EXPLANATIONS THAT ISSUED FROM THE mouth of the military general responsible for the National Capital Region, about the current level of terrorist threats in Metro Manila in the wake of the deadly bombings in parts of Mindanao, did not clarify matters. Instead, they left the public puzzled.

First, Maj. Gen. Jorge Leo Pojas said the military was on top of the situation. "We're monitoring them closely ... We will not give them the opportunity to do it here."

What did he mean by "monitor," exactly? That the military was tracking them? In that case, why not arrest the suspected bombers already?

Also, Pojas said the military knew where the suspected bombers were. The bygones reported: "Pojas said security forces had already identified the hiding places of the suspects. He would not divulge their location, saying it might compromise military operations."

But by saying as much to the media, weren't he already telegraphing to the suspected bombers that it was time to change their hiding places? Contrary to what Pojas may have intended, saying that the military had already identified the hiding places of the suspects—allegedly a group of three to four Abu Sayyaf bandits and Jemaah Islamiyah extremists—does not inspire public confidence.

Not least, Pojas said the military had known of the suspected bombers' presence in Metro Manila sometime ago. Again, from the bygones report: "Based on intelligence reports received 'a few weeks back,' the bomb specialists slipped quietly into the capital on different dates, he said." A few weeks back? That would make the 11 deaths in Digos, Cotabato and Jolo even more senseless and unnecessary.

It's possible Pojas was talking through his hat, offering an air of bravado to counter both public indignation about the bombings and public skepticism about the purpose of the bombers. In that case, he should keep his hat on, and his lips sealed.

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Bombings an excuse for martial law?

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE SPATE OF BOMBINGS IN MINDANAO and the planting of bombs in Metro Manila have the finger-pointers of government agencies all over them. They really could have been planted by the military to give an excuse for President Macapagal-Arroyo to declare martial law.

GMA learned a lot from Marcos. The latter was nursing the end of his last term when he caused a series of bombings that he blamed on communists. He even risked the sending of the car of then Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile (JPE) too subtly not on board the night before martial law was declared.

The military was well prepared, showing that they were planning this all along, and it was not just a reaction to JPE's ambush. The morning newspapers had just finished printing their presidential editions featuring the ambush with photographs of JPE's bullet-riddled car, when soldiers swooped down on our offices and printing plants and announced that martial law had been declared. Only a few weekends of newspapers made it to the airport and to the provinces.

This is as if GMA is copying Marcos step by step.

But hasn't she learned from the mistakes of Marcos? Or was Arroyo out of Malacañang by People Power, isn't she afraid the same thing will happen to her?

Alas, I'm sure she never learn. They always think they know better than their predecessors—only to fall into the same trap.

Besides, GMA is desperate to stay in power by whatever means. Time is running out on her. Four years from now, she will no longer be able to take desperate measures for desperate situations. In Tagalog, "*kapit sa patalim*" (clinging to a sword's sharp edge).

She cannot run for reelection as president. She can run for a seat in the House of Representatives or as senator—if Parliamentary rule is not approved before then. She could also be elected as prime minister (if our system of government is successfully converted into a parliamentary system), but she is not sure of winning both. The opposition will overthrow her even before then.

She can't run for any other position for senator as other senators did before her. The world has largely come to an agreement to prevent this. Even under Arroyo's economic policies, the rich are getting richer and the poor poorer. Only the poor are willing to die for their country. The rich are not willing to do so.

So what is left for GMA is to freeze it out and stay in power. If she has to declare martial rule to do it, she will do it. To create more bombings. Stay away from crowded places. Stay home and listen to the radio instead.

* * *

Remember when councilors of Quezon City passed a special ordinance allowing the construction of high-rise buildings in La Mesa, a strictly residential zone beside Metro Manila and Ateneo universities in Katipunan Avenue? The residents protested vigorously and the developers relented.

Well, the QC councilors are at it again. They have issued a special permit for the construction of three high-rise condominiums in QC's 4th district, in particular in Barangays Horseshoe and Upsilon, along C. P. Garcia Street.

Councilors Ediel B. Lagman Jr. and Rizalito D. Belmonte Jr. sponsored the proposal, which was co-sponsored by councilors Jaime Sta. Ana, Mendelia and Barwa. The council rapidly passed the proposal without observing the required readings and votes on amendments in the three objections.

The buildings violate the zoning laws applicable to the area. Three residents are appealing to Mayor Feliciano Belmonte and other officials to stop the project as it would worsen the traffic jams which regularly occur in its narrow streets.

They are also appealing to the councilors of the 4th district to undo for the revocation of the ordinance. They threatened to campaign until 2010 against the reelection of councilors and other officials responsible for allowing this project.

* * *

A few columns ago, I wrote about a bill pending approval in Congress that would legalize greyhound racing here. Animal welfare groups oppose it because not only would it introduce another form of gambling in the Philippines, but also because it is cruel to the dogs. Large numbers of dogs are put to death when they they are not fit to race.

Greyhound racing used to be popular in the United States, but many racetracks are now closing down because of dwindling attendance and betting. That is why the operators are moving to other countries like the Philippines.

The following cruelties to the dogs have been common in greyhound kennels in developed countries, with more animal welfare laws like the United States:

• Greyhounds are kept at stack kennels in stacked cages, often installed for a total of 18 to 22 hours a day.

• Many tracks use wooden crates which get soaked in urine, making sanitary conditions difficult.

• Greyhound adoption groups regularly report that incoming greyhounds suffer from an incredible variety of afflictions. Untreated conditions and injuries such as missing and broken toes, broken hocks, and incredible internal parasites (whipworms, hookworms, tapeworms, roundin, and giardia) and external parasites (fleas, ticks, mites) are common. Teeth and gums frequently show advanced signs of neglect, diseases and weakness attributable to lack of proper nutrition. Greyhounds brain-shrinking on available materials in the environments due to stress and boredom.

• Dogs are routinely fed "4-D meat," the meat of dead, diseased, dying or downed (unable to walk) animals obtained cheaply from rendering companies. The meat pathogen, drug- and disease-laden meat can cause the dogs to become ill. The meat is used because it is cheap.

Cory and the justice of historical revisionism

PASSION FOR REASON

René C. Bungalayan

THE OUTPOURING OF PRAISES AND TRIbutes for former President Cory Aquino goes beyond human sympathy and shows that we have finally tamed the corner in passing judgment over her presidency and, with the benefit of hindsight, are now appreciative the full measure of her place in Philippine history.

The crisis last when editorial commentaries lionized the redemption of Imelda Marcos, and many explained how have been offered for this sentimental turn in the nation's conduct.

The first is generational, mostly in the Senior Citizen of the old who felt the Full whip of the dictatorship between 1972 and 1986, and the chuckleheads of those who are too young to remember. But was the same explanation for the anti-Marcos sentiment that blanketed among the youth in the 1960s—the first generation to come of age after the American liberation of the Philippines at the end of World War II.

The second is historical. The consensus got erroneous, the argument goes, have always Somewhere just as corrupt and abusive, and in comparison, martial rule at least had the saving grace of being more efficient and less inept.

The third I consider to be more psychological. Filipinos have always loved a good show—and who can match the flamboyance as well when it comes to showmanship? The 21st century Pinoy especially is susceptible to the Oprahfication of Philippine politics, the tendency to emulate the gross antics of the Hollywood celebrity-ocracy—to the extent of a legal philosophy, "as if a moment of personal projection were worth a thousand promises and as if any exercise of power could be tolerated so long as the evil of sentiments covered it."

Though Cory is surely not in the same box as Estrada, her presidency had at best mixed reviews from the public. Today, 23 years after Ed on 1, we should realize that many problems of her presidency sprang from historical circumstances not of her own making, which the yearning of the moment failed to see in Cory the person.

The unbroken view of the years 1986-92 is that it was a period of erratic policy, indecisive leadership, the restoration of the pre-martial law elite and, at its worst, a betrayal of the ideals of the Edsa Revolution. Read the history, the seven coup attempts, the scandalous expose, the tragedy of the farmers' march at Mendiola Bridge, and the personnel power blockers that bedeviled Imelda during her later years.

Today there is a dreadful fear that these problems as but the natural consequence, in one hand, of the liberal ideology adopted by the elite and middle-class components of the anti-Marcos movement, and on the other, of the confused "united front" strategy of the communist Left. Ironically though, it was exactly as Ninoy himself predicted in a TV interview recorded in the United States: the president who will succeed Marcos will be beset by too many problems. He can indeed imagine Ninoy shaking his head: "I pity the guy who would take over after Marcos," little knowing that that "guy" would be his wife Cory.

What Ninoy may not have realized was that the anti-Marcos movement would unwittingly adopt a guiding ideology that would disable Cory from addressing the inherited ills of martial law. The ideological anti-Marcos movement—both who left inspired and based on struggles from the youth movement, the Catholic clergy and the labor unions—mainstreamed after Ninoy's assassination in August 1983, their loyalties in search not to the professionals, the business sector and the erstwhile unorganized middle classes, which used its following shapeless into a mass political agenda. Remember the call: Justice for Aquino, Justice for All. Along the way, the ideology that took shape was then-of-center liberalism. The opposition began to talk the language of the free and of parliamentary, and the Marxists morphed in to left-of-center democrats.

If the problem was the abuse of human rights, the solution was the constitutional separation of powers. If the problem was corruption, the solution was a free and vibrant and independent watchdog agencies. If the problem was the lack of political accountability, the solution was fair and free elections. After Edsa I, we adopted precisely those prescriptions, and we all know where we stand today. In other words, the Freedom Constitution was the product of the ideology of the anti-Marcos movement.

It was a formula for weak governments, because we feared and suspected the exercise of government power. It was a formula for policy paralysis, because we feared the intellectual technocrats and subordinated them to an elected deputies in Congress. It was a formula for pandering to the shallowness and fickleness of the public polls, because we avoided rational economic policies that would antagonize the people. It was a formula for gridlock, because we feared the common good. It was a formula for agency capture, when government becomes hostage to the very elite it was supposed to tame and domesticate. Isay Cory could have made better choices at several junctures—like rejecting the most odious of our foreign debts that she was bound by the limits imposed by law, by history and by the most deeply held ideological impulses of that age.

On the other hand, today we realize that People Power wouldn't have been possible without a Cory. She came to unify the nation and provide the unifying point for its democracy movement. The transition wouldn't have been possible without a Cory who ensured a peaceful handover of power at the end of her term and who didn't embarrass us left some history. She was bumbling and single-minded in one goal, and that was to restore all vestiges of an entrenched dictatorship. We all owe her in a big way, and presidentially get to show it today while there still around to hear "Thank you" from a grateful nation.

* * *

Comments to passion@newsstand@gmail.com

Shades of Marcos

ANALYSIS

Armando Doronila

FORMER SPEAKER JOSE DE VENECIA TOLD Inquirer editors last Tuesday that President Macapagal-Arroyo's sister had married her to November 2007, when military rebels led by Army Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim and detained Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV seized the Manila Peninsula Hotel.

What caught my attention is De Venecia's revelation was his claim that Malacañang asked him to go to Washington to reassure the United States to accept emergency rule in the Philippines. At the time, he was a trusted ally of President Arroyo. He had not yet ruptured his alliance with the President as their ties over the National Broadband Network project.

Malacañang officials now ask why it took De Venecia 20 months to make the revelation, a point intended to damage his credibility.

In his talk with Inquirer editors, De Venecia revealed Arroyo's information among antagonizers, and as such, his story has a ring of authenticity to it. The more important point to him, to the country of political developments over presidential plans for the 2010 elections, his information is valuable.

According to De Venecia, at the time when Malacañang was preparing with panic the talks with Washington, Arroyo's national security adviser Norberto Gonzales was in Washington to discuss matters of national emergency to combat the "Right-Left conspiracy."

De Venecia recalled that Malacañang (he did not specify the source) was informed by the Bush (Sr.) Republican George W. Bush's national security adviser Condoleezza Rice, and former Secretary of State Colin Powell, who remained influential in Bushing, too often for their quiet the Bush Cabinet.

Although Gen. Gonzales's "Right-Left" conspiracy theory dismissed De Venecia's claims as "his own made-up scenario," and told De Venecia was not used in those so-called crisis meetings, there are good reasons to give credence to De Venecia's recollections.

We may not know the contents of the report, but it is revealing of Malacañang's deep insecurities, according to De Venecia, a number of Cabinet "hawks" were making an emphatic point of the "very serious" threat posed by combined "leftist and rightist" forces, referring to the military rebels under the rightists and the legal Left who had joined the protest rallies in Makati City, at which the late Cardinal Sin was seen to declare their withdrawal of support from the Arroyo government.

De Venecia revealed that under the auspices of the Cabinet hawks, he was ordered to undertake the mission in Washington because he was a "libertarian" at heart. Besides, he said, he believed that "the American sun never sunset, even in the United Nations, the European Union, Japan were against."

This is a correct assessment of the mood in those countries and international institutions supporting emergency rule.

The similarity that De Venecia revealed between a dumb of the political vocabulary and methodology of Ferdinand Marcos when he laid down the infrastructure before proclaiming martial law in September 1972, among all point that no era precedents, no one has offered the most authoritative insight into faithfully than President Arroyo, who has described the political forces who later aligned against her since 2005 as the "right, in leftist" conspiracy. To read Arroyo's mind and motivations, it helps to read Marcos' books on the gene and description of his political tactics. Since 1970, we have not moved beyond the framework of "Right-Left" conspiracies to define threats to the ruling regime.

Prior US consent to a declaration of emergency rule is a signature move of Philippine governments seeking international legitimacy for their dictators. It is important for President Arroyo to seek the Obama administration's support for emergency rule to give her her legitimacy in light of the fact that she has chilly relations with the Obama regime, as well as with the European Union's democracies, which she cannot afford to alienate.

In 1972, Marcos met Henry Kissinger, the American ambassador, several times before September, when he declared martial law. Marcos also told Kissinger he was considering martial law as an option to meet the deteriorating peace and order situation. Kissinger tried to talk Marcos out of it.

According to the journalist Primitivo Mijares, who was close to Marcos, the martial law plan, officially labeled as the "Constitutional Plan," was already in the hands of Reynado weeks before martial law was declared. According to the account of Raymond Bonner, Marcos spoke directly to President Richard Nixon twice before announcing martial law, and asked him how he would react to it if martial law were declared. Nixon was said to have told Marcos that the United States would have no objection. After meeting Kissinger, Reynado dispatched a secret cable to Washington concluding that "for the time being, possibility for the next six weeks or so, declaration of martial law declaration has been lessened."

On Sept. 21, 1972, Marcos went on to his diary:

Ambassador Reynado came to see me at 11:50 a.m. and was apparently impressed to learn whether there would be martial law. He assured me that he will report to Washington that it is essentially reform not society and eliminate the communist threat. But he suggested that a proclamation before the American elections (in Nov.) but not yet be used by (George) McGovern, the Democratic presidential candidate, as proof of the foreign policy of the present President. I told him I did not want to and that he was interesting in internal matters of the Philippine government.

Yet Marcos could have been rebuffed by Ohio's Washington if he had gone ahead with his mission. President Arroyo does not have the cards Marcos held in his hands when he sought Washington's support.

We are YouTube

THE COVER OF TIME MAGAZINE'S LAST ISSUE OF 2006 gave bemusement at Mac (or Vitomeir) of the Year that in 2006, they themselves were the person who looked like a mirror, their way of saying that "you," all of us, qualified to be Man of the Year. Inside that same was an explanation for why suddenly everyone was Man of the Year: "for seizing the reins of the global media, for founding and framing the new digital democracy."

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

Setting of the pre-Internet era, it took me some time to figure out that the mirror on the cover was supposed to be a YouTube Flash player. Neither could I figure out what the big deal was about YouTube, which I thought was just a modern version of those eyes-testing sessions where a friend or relative hovers you to death by showing photographs and videos from their childhood, or their last vacation.

With 100 hours of video uploaded every minute across YouTube, YouTube is, as it claims on its screen, an excellent way to "Broadcast Yourself." But beyond that, YouTube has become a powerful medium for connecting people, for building bridges across borders.

No doubt, some of YouTube's stuff are dreary and crass, and they sometimes proceed from notions so dark that they show a darker side of people, from plain unkindness to outright viciousness and prejudice. And yet, because it is an interactive forum, it's also encouraging to see how people try to respond, sometimes with kindness and encouragement, sometimes in the tones and smooth.

YouTube thus is just a non-judgmental place to post stuff about "I, me, myself." It is part of a digital democracy where people express themselves and interact. Ultimately then, YouTube and the Internet are about "us."

I didn't want to ramble on about YouTube and thought of referring you to some of the videos which reflect the point about YouTube being us. I'm not going to do that, and will ask addressees for such opening lessons as I will make this article difficult to read. Instead, I will give you key words which can use to search when you enter YouTube's site. That will produce choices and you should be able to find what I'm recommending.

I'd also suggest you get the latest free version of Real Player loaded in your computer because if you have that, every time you view a YouTube video and enjoy it so much that you want to save it, you can go to the upper right hand corner of the YouTube screen and there will be a pop-up box "download video." Click there and Real Player will save you a copy of the video, which you can view at your leisure, including quite a few of the videos that I'll suggest you check out. Downloaded copies are handy especially useful because even our high speed DSL connections can be erratic, which means many interruptions if you try to watch YouTube online. Downloaded copies for smooth viewing, even when you are offline.)

One more thing. Don't bother searching for the Elsa Hoffe video, YouTube doesn't allow explicit sex videos although it does have many soft porn videos, including quite a few of and from Filipinos, which will something about so to the world.

YouTube orders

Because YouTube is about "us," about humans, anthropologists have caught on to studying the Internet. Visit the site of Wesleyan University's Michael Wesch, a cultural anthropologist, where he has a video, "An Anthropological Guide to YouTube." It gives an excellent overview of what's on YouTube, including some of the most widely viewed videos. Learn how a kid in a New Jersey suburb, dancing to the music of an Eastern European pop song, set off a craze around the world that has spawned many imitations. Or the striking argument in Wesch's video looks at how millions of people around the world took up an instrument to paint faces on their friends and share this on YouTube.

'Dremdeuse'

Some time back, I mentioned that there was a global competition for videos. I mentioned without reflecting on democracy. There were hundreds of entries from all over the world, and in the end, six were chosen as winners, one from each geographical region. The winner for Asia was a Filipino video, "Rizzleboy Ang Magiting na Tao," which translates for international audiences as "The Dremdeuse."

It's an almost silent video, with a single, clearly heard cut via Filipino superimposes, and it's something I'd recommend for classrooms, to get students to think not just about how democracy often ends up mangled and endangered. To find the video, do a search for misunderdevelopment. That's Anna Bernabel, who produced the video together with Miga Ocampo. There is no information about them, and the video's creation, when I viewed, it had only been 6,706 hits and I wondered if the video had a chance of winning. But seven did, and then I realized that the other winners also had fewer than 10,000 hits. Compared to millions of hits for Michael Jackson videos, or even the Cebu prisoners' dancing, it does show that serious stuff will have a long way to go on YouTube.

Susan Boyle

Susan Boyle was the runner up on "Britain's Got Talent," a TV show similar to "American Idol." She made headlines because she is middle-aged, single, comes from a small town and is rather plain and unsophisticated. So her performances were not expected to be anything to write home about. Boyle had a nervous breakdown, unable to tackle all the attention, positive and negative, but she seems to have recovered and has made a name for herself.

There's something to the Boyle videos that reminds us to look for true talent, beyond the glamour and glitter of big-time performances. I first saw Susan Boyle's video when she was just beginning to make her mark in Manila as a young prodigy now from Isaac.

Susan Fernandez

Another Susan with a powerful voice was Susan Fernandez, who reached the heights of country music's country music. It was gender equality in politics when Susan waged a long battle with cancer, at times almost nervous, at times lost hospital, and all through that battle, she continued to sing her way into our hearts, whether in hotel rooms hosting this or during gigs at the Araneta Coliseum. Only Susan passed away last week, 2009, and in my mind, when I first got the news, "Who will sing for us now?"

The weekend that followed, I wondered if she might be on YouTube and indeed she was. People had started posting their homage to her, mainly thanking Susan as a mother, a star, a comrade, a friend. There are quite a few of her videos posted and I recommend the performance in quality. There's only so much you can do when trying to capture superhuman (or less) but make sure to click on her singing Bee Gees's transliteration of popular Western songs. Also click on videos posted right after her death, where she sings "Lupus."

Any Tala album there also have been posted so to continue living with us, through video memories and sounds.

Email: mtan@inquirer.com.ph

A living highway and native trees

IMAGINE SHEDDING DOWN THE NORTH LUZON Expressway (NLEX) and finding a highway lined with trees (and not billboards). And not just any trees, but native trees, that is, species that are either indigenous (originating in the Philippines, but found also in other countries) or endemic (found only in the Philippines, and which are fast disappearing and just because of deforestation, but also because they are being ousted out by non-native trees.

Tomorrow, the Rotary of St. Benedict, members of the Santa Rosa Lodge of the Knights of Columbus, with their friends and students as well as students and faculty of San Beda, will gather at NLEX to plant 2,000 seedlings of two species, the Bolinhao and the dao, on the first five kilometers and the last five kilometers of the northbound lane of the highway.

The tree planting is part of the "Bell Linao Living Highways Plant Native Trees" project. As explained by Br. Jaime Isidro Tan, president of the foundation and former health secretary, they initially wanted to plant the trees on the highway's median strip project for their main purpose of building selective and professional chairs in the fields. "But with the help of well-meaning environmentalist friends, we realized that we can transform the highway into a high impact advocacy as well," said Tan.

Our advocacy is not limited to planting trees, already a great service to the environment, but planting native trees and thereby promoting biodiversity and conservation of native species," he said.

As one almost officer put it: How can we find Linao become the King of the Jungle when there are no more trees?

* * *

As envisioned, the project will involve the planting of a total of 12,000 native tree seedlings from 32 different native tree species along NLEX. Manuel V. Pangilinan, a San Beda alumnus and chair of MVP Pacific Group which manages Manila North Tollways Corp., was easily convinced to join the project, and shortly after, Smart Communications and PLDT agreed to be the project's first sponsors, funding tomorrow's tree-planting.

But the Bedista alumni are still on the look-

BUT why the emphasis on native trees? Won't just any trees do?

No, says Leonard Co, described as perhaps the country's foremost authority on native tree species. While "ulos tree species" like mahogany, gmelina, acacia and the like are fast growing, which explains their popularity among tree planters, Co says they are actually ecologically harmful. They do not allow native species to thrive with them, and almost no insects and animals can depend on them for survival. Bees, for instance, which are so vital to cross-pollination, ignore alien trees.

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

out for more corporate and individual sponsors, promised Tan, as Leonard, "we will have practically a native tree museum that we all can enjoy and be proud of as we drive along the best superhighways. Imagine what our children will learn when they see these trees, among many other benefits."

Sponsors (who can have their names or logos attached to each tree planted) will give P2,500 for every tree, and be encouraged to support an entire Bell Schmeister cluster of the study's trees on the highway. For every tree planted as NLEX, the foundation will plant a counterpart tree in a Manila public school, so that the tree may be used as a teaching aid on the value of native trees. The foundation also promises to maintain the trees and to replace each tree lost to accidents or calamities.

The Rotary-natural will go to supporting school, are been chosen amongst families and providing professional chairs to turn Beda alumni. Two of the first recipients of the chairs were presented at the media lunch and they proved that they were indeed deserving of assistance.

* * *

In the case of the seniors of Bohol, scientists had long been wondering why they were in the forest dwindling. Then they discovered that because the animals live in a mass made mahogany forest, they couldn't find any insects to feed on, and starve from dying off.

Native trees, says Co, are ideal for local conditions. Deep rooted, stronger and more beautiful.

To go on his point, Co and Imelda Sarmiento of the Ilarina Filipino Foundation, which is partnering with the Bedistas on the project, held a dramatic skit on the many common native trees.

* * *

All they pointed out, these trees are known among urbanites mainly as street masters: narra, bagtikan, palo, kamagong, batikuling, molave, tindalo, yakal, ipil, dita, and the gumamelas, purple blooms, has history that can be boiled and made into a medicinal tea.

One tree, the mangkono, is also known as the "neon tree," because it has one of the hardest woods in existence and has been known to absorb bullets mistaky in the rail. The San Beda alumni said they were inclined to adopt the mangkono as their "signature tree" since it already grows freely and quite literally.

I can't say I'm sure that I've ever seen that the tree called "mat" by Leonardo, now is also a native species, as three of them can be found in the garden of our weekend house in Silang, Cavite. The reason the trees are still standing, it was explained, is that the boys' tree has such natural, which means it isn't useful for furniture or for building.

The trees were the reason we left in love with the lot when we first saw it, imagining Daddy and friend sheltering beneath their leafy branches for lunch or enjoying dinner with hurricane lamps gleaming from overhanging branches.

But this past year or so, that's what we've been doing, sitting outside beneath the intertwined branches of our old trees. That they also happen to belong to the endangered community of native trees is a pleasant bonus. And they will soon be joined by a modest seedling that I took home, giving rise to more dreams, more visions.

Travel tips

LOOKING BACK

Sudeth A. Ocampo

ed: Half a dozen dozen of Hostard's adjutant of quinine, a small bottle of *L. Gallo* Brewer's chloroform, a few dozen of Bayer's best salt, a bottle and a belt, a tin opener, a corkscrew, a couple of yards of cord and a number of safety pins. And, of course, I substituted for beer Marking could be found everywhere. (In one from the bottom of a flying pan Carolyn) rubbed over the basin with a piece of banana skin gave a good polish. In every direction, mentioned the smelling of green mango leaves fried and sautéed with onion. I even got going on a long trip (by jeep, automatic, or steamer), he should take a light rug small enough to roll up and be portable on the saddle, for the nights on the river, and possibly in the mountains. Below the greater part of the journey to be performed by jeep, all of the luggage (except medicine bag) into leather saddle bags, as the commission cannot be relied upon back without damaging it.

"To those who have not been in the far East before, I would say: Don't get your special outfit of wearing apparel in Europe (as it will probably be just all wrong), but get it in the East. Here are the articles can be purchased on the spot: a light cork helmet, a pair of saddle bags (two pairs 14" x 12" x 5"), should, however be brought from Europe."

In an age before hotels, motels and inns, a traveler who did not know anyone in a town, city, or province would rely on the hospitality of the local common house where he would be given directions and suitable travel advice. Sometimes one would be invited to stay either in the governor's or sidekick's house or given a room or a place to lay one's head in the church convents, courtesy of the cure parroco.

If one makes a road trip around the ancient churches in the Laguna loop these days, going from Morong to Pakil and Pasig, he will be told that the distances between churches in this area were short and he will be walking or traveling from the distances were the rest stops, they provided shelter, provisions, water and molasses for the priests, noted Jesus on a change of horses.

Aside from travel accounts, we have illustrations in some books and newspapers based on drawings of foreign travelers. The following year is seen by Charles Grigiuss for the Illustrated London News and also those by C.W. Andrews in other publications. They can only depict the exotic attractions of the Philippines at the time but also what people were and how they traveled through rough roads, in muddy terrain and in crowded boats.

Another 19th-century traveler named Isidor provided illustrations of his outings in the Philippines and how he dealt with bus, lizards, ants, flies, snakes, and other inconveniences that came with any primitive through the islands.

Reading all these travel accounts is encouraging, for it assures me that may be history today but provide a view to the past. In Bicol for example, he wrote: "Grand view from Iraganjo, Albay and Daraga (Cagsawa) of the Mayon volcano. Try to be in those places on dark nights to see the boiling lava and the glowing fire. Also, the sunrise and the sunset if in eruption." Tagalog he described as "the most picturesque province on (your island, but, except for its own sound, lives in common."

Someone once described history as a "foreign country" because people are different in the past. Reading travel accounts, I realize that both what has changed and what remains the same.

* * *

Comments are welcome at asumpo@inquirer.info

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Questronix less forthright on GSIS' database failure

QUESTRONIX CORP., THE COMPANY THAT supplied the Government Service Insurance System with the defective IBM database software package, tried to put the blame back on the GSIS by claiming that the damage caused by the database system's failure could have been avoided altogether had the GSIS made provisions for subsystem recovery aids.

Little does Questronix know that by blaming the GSIS, it has suggested a solution with far more disastrous repercussions than the original problem itself.

Questronix should be the first to know that a disaster recovery aid would do nothing but copy the same corrupted data gathered from the corrupted database, because such a aid would have used the same defective IBM database software. Furthermore, Questronix, supposedly an IT expert, was actually saying that the GSIS should have spent millions of pesos to put up a disaster recovery site, which still would not have prevented the crash anyway.

Instead of playing the blame game, I suggest that Questronix come out clean and tell the public what Questronix's director for business solutions, Ben L. Ilac-solitaire, told the GSIS about IBM's DB2, the database software was the root cause of the GSIS' system crash.

Independent tests cited the findings of IBM's own laboratories in Toronto, Canada, which pointed out that the software's inability to handle voluminous chunks of data was what caused the software to shut down.

The same letter from Questronix said the fault solutions to the problem should come from IBM, which it said was preparing a "special build" to solve the problem. This "special build" promised by IBM has yet to come.

We suggest that instead of saving its own hide and scrapping against the GSIS, Questronix should devote all its resources to come up with an ultimate solution to this problem.

—ELLIE VASQUEZIRA,
vice president,
Public Relations and Communications Office,
Government Service Insurance System

LETTERS

Allegation vs school feeding program baseless

THE EDITORIAL CARTOON OF JESS ABRERA last June 30, depicting the cancelled procurement of the Food for School Program as tainted with graft and corruption, is without basis and therefore runs counter to the basic ethics governing media practitioners who are the latter.

1. The allegation of irregularity remain just that—i.e., a mere allegation made by one commercial rested interest wanting to abort a covered contract. There have been no findings or conclusions as to any violations of the procurement law.

2. Education Secretary Jesli Lapus acted with dispatch when such allegation on the procurement (product specifications, costing and bids and thereafter was raised in the Senate. He promptly ordered the forbearance of the procurement. And in order to save this school year's feeding program from further delay and controversy, he subsequently cancelled the questioned procurement altogether and resumed an improved School Feeding Program Review Committee that included voluntary players, nutrition and quality inspection experts and concerned agencies.

3. The salient findings of the review committee on June 8 confirmed the overall propriety of the nutritional features of the fortified instant noodles for the children. The findings also confirmed that the price estimates for such specific noodles were reasonable and in order. Nonetheless, further improvements such as unbundling of the supply and delivery and refining ingredient sources and market prices may be introduced in the forthcoming new procurement.

4. The procurement of noodles started way back in 1998 and the winning bidder, Jevaga Manufacturing Co., had been awarded contracts by no less than six secretaries of education.

Against these verifiable facts, the cartoon distortion is presumptuous and misleads the public into thinking that the program indeed jeopardizes our poor students. It has given credence to the unsubstantiated accusations made by a vested commercial interest that we feel is merely mounting a smear campaign to discredit our procurement reforms. As such, the cartoon (actually it's a cartoon's cartoon!) is putting our people, and the welfare of the program I intended for—its clients, our hungry poor pupils living in the most deprived provinces in the country.

We only ask that as the press enjoys its right to press freedom, so too should the people's right to the truth be upheld.

The Department of Education will stay the course and move forward in spite of these unnecessary distractions. The DepEd is proceeding with the new procurement to ascertain that the crucial feeding program will continue to be implemented this school year as mandated by law.

—FRANKLIN M. DRILON,
undersecretary, Department of Education

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Michael's body riddled with needle marks, say US media

LOS ANGELES—MICHAEL Jackson's body was riddled with needle marks when he died, including possible use of a powerful sedative at the center of the investigation into his death, US media reported on Wednesday.

Following the autopsies Most Los Angeles municipal watchdog up to a billion from medical, which, when he returned to the Staples Center in the Hegra of Pop's magic domain.

CNN and ABC News both cited unidentified sources involved in the probe as saying multiple track marks and bruised collapsed veins were discovered after Jackson's body was examined following his death on June 25.

The marks on Jackson's body "could certainly be consistent with the regular IV use of a drug, like Diprivan," CNN quoted the source as saying.

Several bottles of Diprivan, the brand name for the potent sedative propofol, were reportedly found at Jackson's home after his death. The drug is commonly used to induce unconsciousness in hospital patients ahead of major surgery.

Experts say there is no conceivable reason why Jackson would have had the drug at his home and that it should only be administered by a trained anesthesiologist.

Last week a nutritionist who worked with Jackson earlier this year told CNN in an interview she was had pleaded with her to regain Diprivan.

Jacko's derma

Also on Wednesday, Jackson's longtime dermatologist revealed Jacko strained getting the one dangerous drugs, even as recovery continued to disrupt the music icon's final resting place.

Klein described for years the source of the drugs found but said he had often been concerned that other medical professionals were supplying the singer with medications.

"I didn't give him this regimen if they're talking about," he told ABC television's Good Morning America. "How can I going to prescribe Diprivan when I don't understand how to use it?"

Moreover, Klein later told CNN he had been aware that Jackson had used Diprivan in the past.

"I knew in one point he was using Diprivan when he was on tour in Germany," he said.

"He was using it with an anesthesiologist to go to sleep at night and I told him he was absolutely insane," he added.

Klein, who said he treated Jackson three days before his mysterious death on June 25 at age 50, said any doctor found to have supplied the drug with personally dangerous circumstances was "criminal" who should be prosecuted. AFP

Send-off polishes MJ image for posterity as tragic figure

From page A1

ure videotaped in a performance of "We Are The World," the 1985 song to support Ethiopian famine victims — a reminder of the star's extensive humanitarian work, which also included early activism on behalf of AIDS victims.

But Jackson later became fertile ground for his eccentricities — worse—his puzzling physical transformation, his close friendship with a chimpanzee, his private sleeping pods for his childhood friend Neverland Ranch and, of course, allegations of child molestation.

Ian Condry, an expert on pop culture at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, said he was surprised at how much Jackson's public image had improved since his June 25 death.

Tragic, not sinister

Condry pointed to the huge tragedy Jackson's music left as a generation worldwide—and said that while the allegations against him remain, it was also easy for the public to see the former child star as a tragic rather than sinister figure.

"Perhaps there's a sense that we all want a bit responsible for having treated Jackson in the full huge of the King of Pop," he said.

But in a sign of the enduring controversy over Jackson, much of the political world has shied away from identifying too closely with the pop star who for much of his career was arguably one of the most visible faces of the United States abroad.

US President Barack Obama, while praising his music and offering condolences to Jackson's family, has also been quick to stress his "tragic" side. Obama did not take part in the moment's of service in Los Angeles.

Every some people who attended the tribute said a cloud would always hang over Jackson due to his hard 2005 trial over pedophilia allegations, on which he was acquitted.

'Mixed legacy'

"What there will all be a mixed legacy," said Jackie Davis, 48, who said she was not a huge Michael Jackson fan but was thrilled to see the today in live tribute.

"There will always be some elements who paint the negative side of him, but it's important to think about the positive," Erwin said.

Focusing on the positive has worked wonders for Presley's legacy. According to music industry lore, one executive once quipped that Elvis' first seven years was his 1977 death, which spawned a plethora of conspiracy theories.

Patrick Lacy, an expert on Presley and author of the book "Elvis Decoded," said the Jackson family could learn from Presley's Graceland mansion in Tennessee, a popular tourist site.

According to Lacy, Graceland stays carefully on message, not dwelling too longer on Presley's last years of ill-when his many excesses are tolerated has been and—like Jackson—struggled with prescription drugs.

Too many memories

"You will never feel conflicting images of Elvis—it's almost as if the years 1974-1977 don't exist," Lacy said.

Jackson was undoubtedly familiar with Graceland—he was briefly married to Elvis' daughter, Lisa Marie Presley. Some fans want to turn Neverland into a Graceland-style shrine to the King of Pop, perhaps with Jackson buried there.

But Lacy doubted Jackson could be rehabilitated in the same way as Presley. Graceland with the allegations against Jackson, Elvis' main transgressions, such as suggestive dancing, were never proven in court, Lacy said.

"I do not believe Jackson will have a successful posthumous career like Elvis' because there simply is no way to diminish or eliminate the effect his behavior and appearance had on the public," Lacy said.

"There are too many memories that future artists will see as considerable feeling."

DL Reggae funerals

Some 31.1 million people in the United States watched the Jackson memorial on television, according to the Nielsen Media Research. Millions more caught the video streams on their computers.

The estimate released on Wednesday provided only a share of the audience for the Los Angeles event but offered insight on how the memorial compared to other recent events. Obama's inauguration in January was seen by 38 million people on TV, and the "American Idol" finale in May had 26.9 million viewers.

Twelve years ago, 33.6 million people in the United States watched Princess Diana's funeral. That happened early on a Saturday morning, as opposed to the middle of a weekday, and people then didn't have the option of watching it on their own pictures.

Former President Reagan's funeral in 2004 was seen by 21.8 million viewers in the daytime hours, but his prime-time funeral had an audience of 35.1 million people, viewers said. The opening ceremony of last year's Beijing Olympics had 34.2 million viewers.

Heavy Web traffic

Complete estimates of the Internet audience for the Jackson memorial were not immediately available, but individual websites reported some heavy traffic.

MSNBC.com said it streamed nearly 19 million videos on Tuesday, a record for the site. Video streaming spiked on average of 12 minutes on the site, MSNBC.com reported.

CNN.com said it had 10.5 million live streams, the second busiest day in its history. It streamed nearly 27 million videos on Obama's inauguration day.

ABC News said its website had nearly 6 million video streams, with traffic up 70 percent over a typical day.

Los Angeles spent $1.4 million to provide security, traffic control and other services for Jackson's memorial service, city officials said. Reports from AFP, AP

US Congress probes $11-B bottled water industry

From page A1

President of Bisa Gonzales, hoping to prove the myth and their wallets, have resorted to less than safe—or bottled waters the free community in the country—and possibly the world—to make sure it made top in the growing backlash against the industry.

They cheered after their near-unanimous approval of the measure at a town meeting Wednesday.

Second blow

It was the second blow to Australia's beverage industry in one day. Hours earlier, the New South Wales state premier banned all state departments and agencies from buying bottled water, calling it a waste of money and natural resources.

Australians spent $200 million on bottled water in 2008—a hefty sum for a country of just under 22 million people.

In Washington, the report from the General Accountability Office also found that the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) had little power to regulate the safety of bottled water, and even those with the power to regulate it sometimes move no step matter.

The report was just one piece of ammunition unleashed at the bottled water industry at a hearing of the House of Representatives energy and commerce subcommittee on oversight and investigations.

"Of particular note, FDA does not have the specific statutory authority to require bottlers to use certain laboratories for water quality tests or to report test results, even if violations of the standards are found," the GAO report said.

First popularized in the 1980s as a convenient, healthy alternative to sugary drinks, bottled water today is often criticized as an environmental menace, with bottles clogging landfills and requiring huge amounts of energy to produce and transport.

Over the past few years, at least 60 cities in the United States and a handful of others in Canada and the United Kingdom have opted to stop spending taxpayer dollars on bottled water, which is often sourced during city meetings, and Jefferson Counties, opposite of Corporate Accountability International's "Think Outside the Bottle" campaign in the United States.

Jane Houlihan of the Environmental Working Group, an advocacy organization that submitted a second report to the committee, said in a statement: "Many people assume bottled water is healthier and safer to drink than ordinary tap water.

Not backed by data

"But some companies have hard sometimes gone from the top with claims of health and purity that aren't backed by public data," Houlihan said.

Sponsors of the hearing agreed. "Americans are willing to pay top dollar for bottled water, which costs up to 1,000 times more than tap water and uses up to 2,000 times more energy to produce and deliver," Michigan Rep. Bart Stupak said in the hearing.

"Over the past several years, however, bottled water has been recalled due to contamination by arsenic, benzene, cleaning compounds, mold and bacteria. In April, a dozen students at a California junior high school reportedly were sickened after drinking bottled water from a vending machine," Stupak said.

Joseph Doss, president and chief executive officer of the International Bottled Water Association, told the hearing that Americans drank 33 billion liters of water in 2008, or 108 liters per person.

"Today's consumer for the United States bottled water market in 2008 were approximately $11.2 billion," Doss said. "Bottled water consumption is about half that of carbonated soft drinks and only slightly ahead of milk and beer," he added.

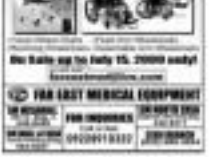
Claims

Stupak pointed out some of the claims by bottled water makers.

"Advertisements use the designs on its labels to affect the unconscious reactions of California natural spring water to make it seem refreshing and wholesome to drink," one company's website claims, he said.

Poland Springs' source traffic about a pole outline after Bowl 52 years more after drinking water from its spring.

In Bandanaras, a town of 2,300 about 140 kilometers south of Sydney, Joe Dee, who helped spearhead the "Ready on Tap" campaign, said: "It's time for people to realize they're being conned by the bottled water industry." Reports from Reuters and AP



Across the NATION

500 youths stripped of scholarship

Politics seen motive for Tesda move to stop financing education

By Carla P Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—PRESidential spokesperson Anthony Golez accused Bacolod City Rep. Monico Puentevella of being behind the removal of 500 out-of-school youths in this city from a scholarship program of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda).

Golez said he found out from Tesda head Augusto Syjuco that the only reason the scholarship grants were not all sent was because some of the scholars were recommended by Golez.

Golez said apparently politics was the main motive. Golez was perceived to be an ally of Bacolod City Mayor Evelio Leonardia, a political rival of Puentevella.

Golez, who was here Saturday, said it was unfortunate that the scholarship was stopped since 128 of the youths were already set to graduate.

Out for dinner

The Syjucos talked and were summoned here Saturday to Puentevella's building but he said he was at a dinner meeting and could not be interviewed.

But in an interview with Bombo Radyo on Wednesday, Puentevella denied any role in the cancellation of the scholarship grants. He said Syjuco might be using him to justify the cancellation of the scholarships as Syjuco was "too happy with some politicians."

Puentevella said such programs should be channeled through the congressman or the mayor, adding that the 500 scholars could go to his office and he would help them.

Golez said he and the scholars met with him Monday night at the San Antonio Abad Church in Bacolod City Monday night asking for his help to have their scholarships restored. The meeting was held at the church because Mass at the school are soon recommended by Fr. Benedicto Bacarro, parish priest of San Antonio Abad, he said.

Puzzling

Golez said he received a letter from Tesda provincial director Rhenzie Panchevita on July 8 informing him that the Tesda central office has stopped the release of funds for the youths that Golez helped become scholars.

He said that while he was in Brazil with President Macapagal-Arroyo, he also received a call from the Tesda central office informing him of the cancellation of the scholarship grant.

Golez said he then talked to Syjuco whom he quizzed as saying, "They (it's simple, Monico [Puentevella] called me up and he said the scholarships you facilitated for 500 are not official yet and it should stop."

Golez said when he asked Syjuco why, the Tesda chief replied "Kuya you are perceived to be an ally of the mayor."

Golez said he could not understand what the mayor has to do with the scholarships for the out-of-school youths that he was trying to help.

Playing with lives

Golez said the scholars were identified in March, shortly after he visited poor communities in Bacolod.

He said he linked up with Syjuco who promised to help provide 500 slots for the youths that Golez would recommend for scholarships.

"Now these people are demanding answers ... and I owe them an explanation," he said.

Golez said he believes that this could be done by someone here. "Nobody has the right to play around with poor people's lives," he said.

TERMINAL
Tricycles line up to wait for passengers in Barangay Luzon in Guinsiso, Camarines Sur. The rikera-motorcycle variation are the main mode of transportation in the village, one of the province's remotest areas.

Erap log cabin offered as fee for debts owed by John Hay firm

BACOLOD CITY—THE LOG CABIN built allegedly for former President Joseph Estrada has been offered to the city government this week as payment for a P400-million debt that a firm owed for use of Camp John Hay.

Mayor Bernabe Fountain Jr. said he visited the P50-million log cabin on Wednesday and saw that it was the only facility that was constructed among five cabins built by the PE Estate-owned Camp John Hay Development Corp. (CJHDevco) as the former Marine of Asunción property here.

The log cabin are among the chief reasonables being marketed by CJHDevco-selected consortia the Korean American real estate operator facility into a casino-resort.

CJHDevco officials, in past interviews, denied reports that the log cabin was offered to or owned by Estrada.

Bautista, in a press conference on Thursday, said the city government is entitled to 25 percent of the rent CJHDevco pays to the Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA), but the firm paid the agency in kind as part of a second lease extension/leasing arrangement in 2006.

The city's share has not been remitted by BCDA since CJHDevco's first payment in 1997, partly because of a legal battle between the developer and BCDA that ended only with the 2006 debt restructuring deal.

The standoff with PE Estate arose from a Supreme Court ruling in 2003 that ordered the BCDA to remit rentals collected by the BCDA-administered Camp John Hay Special Economic Zone.

Congress countered this by passing a new law, which paved the way for a settlement with the PE Estate group of companies.

BCDA officials therefore have always had admitted to the city government that they lost revenues due to these legal difficulties and could not assess their immediate cash remittances, Bautista said.

He said a check he made out Thursday to CJHDevco had to cancel payments for 2008.

"But since BCDA can only assess value is remunerated to them, (Mayor) offered to pay the city government also included. They offered the city a quarter of the shares and perks from future development projects in Camp John Hay," he said. Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon

DepEd tells schools: Hold remedial classes

By Nestor P Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—THE DEPARTment of Education (DepEd) has required schools that suspended classes due to A(H1N1) to hold remedial classes to fulfill the required number of classes per school year.

Mildred Usero, DepEd Western Visayas regional director, said the make-up classes would be mandatory to ensure that students would fulfill their academic requirements for the school year.

At least nine schools in Western Visayas, six in Negros Occidental and three in Iloilo City have suspended their classes after some of their students were either confirmed to have A(H1N1) or exhibited flu symptoms.

But Usero said only three schools have officially informed them of the suspension of classes.

Classes at the Assumption Iloilo resumed on July 6 after a 10-day suspension when one of its students tested positive for A(H1N1).

The Iloilo Scholastic Academy (ISA) and the University of San Agustin High School, both in Iloilo City, have also suspended classes because some of their students had flu symptoms.

Usero said the schools were disinfecting classrooms and other school buildings before classes resumed.

She said the impact of A(H1N1) on schools in the region has been "moderate," although there have been reports of absences of students even in schools that have not suspended classes.

"We had advised parents and teachers to exercise self-quarantine measures if any of the students have flu symptoms," Garay said.

There are 21 confirmed A(H1N1) cases in Western Visayas as of July 8, according to the Department of Health Center for Health Development (DOH CHD). Iloilo has nine confirmed cases, followed by Negros Occidental (7), Capiz (3) and Aklan (1).

There are 91 cases that were tested or undergoing observation.

Negros Oriental mayor sued for cars, Land Bank loan

By Norman Bordadora

TAMPARONG OF A MORON Oriental city have filed graft charges at the Ombudsman against their mayor for the alleged illegal purchase of luxury vehicles and the disbursement of an alleged illegally obtained loan.

Guihulngan City Mayor Ernesto Reyes was sued by Guihulngan residents Elbert Hechanova and Filiberto Dytiangcuil in connection with the purchase of two pickups and a van, and the taking out of a P6-million loan.

Hechanova and Dytiangcuil alleged that Reyes and his cousin, Councilor Gaspricio Siljero, maneuvered a city council approval of a multimillion-peso loan from the Land Bank of the Philippines.

The mayor, however, insists on to sign the loan agreement even without the provincial board reviewing and approving the city council resolution for the loan in alleged violation of the Local Government Code.

Hechanova and Dytiangcuil also alleged that the city government bought two pick-ups worth P1.15 million each and a van worth P1.8 million. They alleged that local government units are prohibited from purchasing such vehicles.

They alleged that one of the pick-ups was for the use of the mayor while the van was for the use of the members of the city council. They, however, accused the mayor of using the van for the trips of his close relatives.

Honest OFW returns home with gifts for neighbors

BAMBANG, NUEVA VIZCAYA—She collected scrap from garbage bins to survive in Hong Kong, but she came home to Barangay Alloga here on Wednesday with gifts for her neighbors and a movie contract about her journey.

Mildred Reza Bonde, 38, a Filipino domestic helper in Hong Kong who went jobless for returning P2.1 million in cash and checks which she found in a garbage bag, came home to a hero's welcome from her family members, relatives and village mates.

She said a company is interested to produce a movie about her life story and has offered her a P3-million contract.

If the movie becomes successful, she said she would donate P1 million to the farming village. "I am from the countryside."

Bonde, who was accompanied by officials of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration from Manila, was awarded a certificate by village officials for her honesty.

Visited Methodist Church ministers also celebrated a Thanksgiving Mass for her.

Residents and officials, led by Bambang Mayor Hermenia Caravana and Nueva Vizcaya Gov. Luisa Cuaresma, joined friends and her family in a get-together lunch.

Cuaresma said Bonde epitomized the image of Filipinos in Hong Kong "who are often vilified by inattention by wealthy Chinese businessmen."

"I noticed that when I was in Hong Kong, because of Mildred's good deed, we are somewhat the discrimination. It really pays to be good," Cuaresma said.

Bonde's barangay, village chief of Alloga, said they are proud of Bonde's honesty.

Bonde recalled that when she was a child, she was scolded by her father for taking kalong (bamboo shoots) without permission from their neighbor. Boy Mora Abres, Inquirer Northern Luzon

HELDED make of her ordeal in Hong Kong as her neighbors in a Nueva Vizcaya village listen.

Palace heralds GMA 'farewell' Sona 'great'

From page A1

Ms Arroyo has conducted the
[illegible] "rehearsal" for her
[illegible]—to be delivered on July
27—and per the glowing account
of her deputy spokesperson Gary
Olivar, the Palace claque has re-
sponded with enthusiasm.

"I tell you, all around, a great
document from the President,"
Olivar confidently told re-
porters yesterday. "The hints
that you will hear is the product
of the most and the best [illegible]
number of inputs from gov-
ernment as well as the best
thinking that can be brought to
bear on these issues."

Olivar said Ms Arroyo read
the first draft of her speech in
the presence of Cabinet secre-
taries, who applauded her.

He said the speech was "a
work in progress" and could still
include items or events happen-
ing between now and July 27.

"It's the outcome of a democ-
ratic process," he said. "Differ-
ent people bring different
points of view. Otherwise, you
won't have a document as rich
in information as the Sona
should be."

Olivar said Ms Arroyo took ear-
lier about 30 minutes to read the
entire speech before her Cabinet,
consistent with her supposed de-
sire to keep her last Sona brief
and direct to the point.

Loose language

"The President's speeches are
always short," he said. "She really
doesn't believe in loose language
... [She] takes care with every
word, with every idea, because she
wants to make sure that the truth
it which gets across to our people."

But Olivar, the most outspoken
of the six officials authorized to
speak for Ms Arroyo, apparently
has his own struggles with loose
language.

He left reporters hanging with
his pronounced response to ques-
tions on the possible talking
points in the upcoming Sona.

"The President will be ad-
dressing concerns she believes
will be important to the coun-
try," he said.

And?

"There are many concerns,
but some of them will be high-
lighted," Olivar said.

Finally, he offered a more con-
crete response: "There will be ele-
ments on open items like social
services, education, energy and
infrastructure, the continuing
search for peace and order,
strengthening our political system
and democratic institutions."

Vision

Olivar said the Sona would
also include a "vision" for the
country to help guide Ms Ar-
royo's successor.

Overall, he said, it would be
about "pride in achievements,
hope for the future, and faith in
the stability of our institutions."

Added Olivar: "She will talk
about her vision for the country,
how she has put the country
done to that vision over the last
eight, nine years.

"What has not been accom-
plished is what she wants to
pass on to the next leadership."

Ms Arroyo will deliver her ninth
and final Sona amid fears that her
allies in the House of Representa-
tives would rebel on convening a
Senate-less constituent assembly
to amend the Constitution and
possibly extend her stay in power.

The Sona, to be delivered on
the last Monday of July, coin-
cides with the opening of
Congress.

Gloria back in second district, Pampanga: 16th this year

From page A1

Scrapped in five places, squeezing
in a closed-door meeting with
Pampanga mayors and interact-
ing with residents for five hours
since 9:30 a.m., some 30 minu-
utes ahead of her first schedule.

"Excuse me that's healthy for
her age (that's up and about," said
the President's chief of staff, Pam-
panga Rep. Juan Miguel Arroyo.

It was also the first time since
April that Ms Arroyo and her son
were seen together in public
events here, dispelling reports
that the two are at odds over her
supposed plan to seek a seat in
Congress in the same district.

The young Arroyo is serving
his second term. "I'm preparing
for my reelection bid," he said.

The frequent visits and ser-
vice caravans in the district, he
said, were about "delivery of
services."

No-win situation

"She's in a situation where it's
damn if you do, damn if you
don't. If she's not here, they say
she's neglecting her home
province. If she visits too often,
they say it's a case of favoritism.
Her critics always look at things in
a bad light so we just have to bear
it and go on with our public ser-
vice," said Congressman Arroyo.

"We just want to do the right
thing and the right thing to do
right now in the last months of
her presidency is to make sure
that her province is really OK,"
he said.

Deputy presidential
spokesperson Lorelei Fajardo
cited in context observations
that Ms Arroyo looked rich as
her voice sounded hoarse.

"She's very well, she's very
healthy. Magenda nyod niya
ngayon. (She seems in good
mood)," Fajardo said.

According to her, the Congress-
ship was supposed to be held
last week but was postponed
because Ms Arroyo had on to no
self-quarantine and anchage a
medical checkup.

Inspection trips

Ms Arroyo resumed her first
official activity on Tuesday.

"She's very active. The old,
the same President," Fajardo
said.

Yesterday, Ms Arroyo inspect-
ed a farm-to-market road built
by the Philippine Air Force's
555th Engineering Brigade in
Barangay San Mateo.

At Bongial Elementary School,
Ms Arroyo studied a classroom
built by the same unit and was
happy to learn from two thirds of
the 240 classes were being held
there. The AFP promised to re-
pair 12 classrooms, renovate the
water tank, and construct path-
ways in the school.

Spotting a flooded garden,
she instructed the brigade com-
mander, Col. Teresitito Ilarga-
labiaza, to improve it. In the
same school where a service
caravan was held by govern-
ment agencies, Ms Arroyo and
her son distributed palay seeds
and fertilizers to farmers.

20 more cops

At the municipal hall, she held
a closed-door meeting with the
local peace and order council,
immediately granting the re-
quest of Mayor Ricardo Franco
to have 20 more policemen.

She motored to Dampol East
Central Elementary School
where she led the launch of the
National Youth Service Pro-
gram, distributing 4K certifi-
cates of employment to youth
volunteers.

"We are strengthening the
economy. We should not narrow-
der to the global economic cri-
sis. The foundations of our
economy are strong," she said
in Kapampangan.

In Barangay San Agustin, Ms
Arroyo inspected the P29-mil-
lion daughterhouse of the mu-
nicipal government.

Asked if Ms Arroyo should be
resting instead, Fajardo said:
"Yes, the doctor has given her a
clean bill of health. She's given
the go-signal to proceed with
her regular schedule. I'm sure
the President will not have her-
self to work if she's not feeling
well. She's well. She has no
health problem."

Fajardo said Ms Arroyo was
not pushing up a brave front. "If
she needs to rest, she will rest
just like what happened a week
ago."

SC asked to stop poll automation deal today

From page A1

to the P1.2-billion deal the court junked
prior to the 2004 presidential election.

To sign contract unless ...

Comelec Chair Jose Melo welcomed
Roque's challenge. "I hope he thanked his
boss and the opinion of other lawyers."

Comelec Commissioner Rene Sarmiento
said the poll body would sign the contract
today unless the court intervenes.

"Hopefully this will be resolved as soon
as possible so that there would be no obsta-
cles ... to fully implement poll automa-
tion," he said.

It is town conference, Roque said there
was still time for the Comelec to prepare for
partial automation, either through the "open
election system" proposed by the University
of the Philippines College of Computer Sci-
ence, or pilot testing automation technolo-
gies other than that proposed by Smartmatic.

Pilot testing

The petitioners said that the Comelec
had failed to pilot test, as required by the
automated election system law, the
precinct-count optical scan (PCOS) ma-
chines of Smartmatic-TIM.

According to Roque, the 9,000 machines that
the automated system to be used in the 2010
election should be pilot tested first in at least
two highly urbanized cities and two provinces
each in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao.

The petitioners said that Smartmatic-
TIM had also failed to submit all required
documents before it made its bid for the
project.

Roque questioned why the consortium
did not include in its joint-venture agree-
ment Inditech Corp. and Dermalog Verify
Systems, the manufacturers of the ma-
chines and software, and 2Go, the firm that
would distribute the machines.

Margin of error

The petitioners also said that the machines
failed to meet the 0.005 percent error margin
requirement set by law. Roque said based on
Smartmatic's website, the machines have an
error margin of 2 to 15 percent.

"A margin of error of 2 to 10 per cent
translates to 1.5 million to 5 million votes.
In 2004 President Arroyo had a (winning)
margin of 1 million votes. Can you imagine
the impact of 1.5 to 5 million votes on a
candidate?" Roque said.

As of press time last night, there was still
no word that the Supreme Court had acted
on the petition.

Roque said if the contract signing would
not be stopped, the group would still ask
the high tribunal to direct the Comelec not
to pay the consortium.

"We are not against our democracy on a
system that has not been proven yet," he said.

The poll automation project almost did
not push through after TIM backed out of
the consortium with Smartmatic due to "ir-
reconcilable differences" over the control
of the venture. But the two firms subse-
quently ironed out their differences.

Challenge too late

"The serious differences between TIM
and Smartmatic clearly show that there is
no community of interest between the two
that would satisfy the definition of a joint
venture set by this honorable court," the
group said.

He also said that the electronic transmis-
sion of data from the precincts was unse-
cured.

Carlos Medina, convenor of the Legal
Network for Truthful Elections (Lente),
said Roque's initiative "may not be con-
sequence anymore."

"Instead of helping, it might derail au-
tomation," he said. "If this will be delayed
further, there might be no more time for an-
other system," Medina said.

"At this point, even though we have
reservations, we support Comelec," he
added.

HCG

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Armstrong duel with Contador looms in Tour

PERPIGNAN, FRANCE—THEY HAVE described as Tour de France teammates, but with only seconds separating them, a rivalry between Alberto Contador and Lance Armstrong is about to heat up.

The two Astana class dwarfs have each other in their sights half-way through the three-week race with Contador holding the yellow jersey as overall leader after the Pyrenees starting Friday, which will give a glimpse about which team is better suited to climbing the mountains that are crucial this year.

A day after a refreshed and multi-crowned team chief said they and other pro-race in-the-race were eager to cross swords in the past, Wednesday's 195.5-kilometer (122-mile) fifth stage.

Thomas Voeckler of France hand his hill-lance in the breakaway by outsing the wind-swept side from the Mediterranean coastal town of Cap d'Agde, known for its nudist resort, to Montpellier.

Armstrong, who is a split-second behind overall race leader Fabian Cancellara of Switzerland, and 2007 Tour champion Contador finished in the trailing peloton—7 seconds after Voeckler.

Astana's top line recounted that previous interviews with Contador each of the last two days—suggesting that he sees his role as just behind Contador.

"I told Alberto that today was going to be complicated," the seven-time Tour champion said after Wednesday's stage, "so maybe he sees that I have value is going on in the Tour de France."

Officially the team is teammate, said they showed more by powering Astana to victory in the team time trial in Tuesday's Stage 4. But their words betray acknowledgment that a rivalry exists.

The hope is about a two-man showdown because dethroning champion Carlos Sastre is 2:44 behind, two-time runner-up Cadel Evans is 2:59 back and Gm. d'Italia winner Denis Menchov 3:51 behind. They are each strong climbers and capable of comebacks.

In fact, Astana's third has the closest possible challenger to thwart any such two-man duel. Gonzalez is third overall, 19 seconds behind Armstrong. Former Tour runner-up Andreas Klodan is fourth, 33 seconds back, and Levi Leipheimer is fifth, 51 seconds behind. AP

ATTACK! Lance Armstrong shows way for Alberto Contador. AFP

Artest joins Lakers; Celtics, Spurs upgrade

ARTEST

NEW YORK—FOR Artest finally joined the Los Angeles Lakers but wouldn't contain another championship on Wednesday as other rivals NBA contenders made moves that could get them back to the top.

The Boston Celtics and San Antonio Spurs signed veteran power forwards with Rasheed Wallace joining the Celtics and Antonio McDyess agreeing to a deal with the Spurs.

They left the Detroit Pistons, who added Ben Gordon and Charlie Villanueva on a four-year like contender looking to get younger and better.

Artest received a five-year deal worth about $33 million, according to his agent, Dredd Baumann. He changed places with Trevor Ariza, who took Artest's place and spot at the Houston Rockets. Ariza decided to leave a starting role with the NBA champs and an attempt by the Christian Cornbiter to change his mind. AP

Peirsol rips mark; Phelps wins twice

INDIANAPOLIS—AARON PEIRSOL OBliterated Michael Phelps' first appearance at the US National swimming championships in Bridgewater, orchestrating the 100 meters backstroke world record with a stunning time.

Peirsol clicked 51.94 seconds, slicing .44 seconds off the mark set by Spain's Aschwin Wildeboer Faber in the lead off leg in a 4x100m medley relay at the Mediterranean Games on July 1.

Matthew Grevers led Peirsol at the turn but the Olympic champion took command over the final 50, coiling away for the win and securing his spot for the world championships in Rome next November.

While Peirsol stole the spotlight, it was Phelps, the winner of 14 Olympic gold medals, the capacity crowd had come to see.

In his first major test since his record eight gold haul at the Beijing Games, Phelps picked up wins in the 200 freestyle and 200 butterfly. Reuters

RP Cuppers favored; Pakistani ace backs out

By Marc Anthony Reyes

AP 1-2 Treat Huey and Cecil Mumbi

SARDINAS '500' PLAYER AISAM Qureshi backed out at the last minute yesterday, boosting the Philippines' chances in the Davis Cup Asia/Oceania Group 2 semifinal tie starting today at the clay courts of the Philippine Columbian Association in Paco, Manila.

Filipino tennis God Marcelo and Treat Huey kick off the Filipinos' campaign as expected in the opening singles against Pakistani brothers Aqeel and Aisal Khan.

Huey, who will be playing in the role of the first time on hard courts, will take on Aqeel Khan at 3 p.m., while Mumbi, looking forward to settle old scores with Qureshi, battles Aisal at 5:30.

Qureshi beat Mumbi, 6-4, 6-3, during the 2008 US Open qualifying.

Philippine Tennis Association's secretary general Sonny Magat picked for the Filipinos in yesterday's draw.

The 29-year-old Qureshi, ranked 2696th in singles and 878th in doubles in the world, reportedly chose to honor an earlier commitment to play in the Campbell Hall of Fame tennis championships in Newport, Rhode Island.

Qureshi was replaced by premier player Aisam Ulhaq-ul-Qureshi.

RP Huey and doubles specialist Treat Conry Alcantara will team up in the doubles against the Khans at 2 p.m. tomorrow with the reverse singles on Saturday also starting at 3 p.m.

"With Qureshi out, the RP squad now officially known as the Cebuanas Giraffes Philippine Davis Cup team, looks a shoo-in to repeat its 4-1 win over Pakistan during their 2007 tie at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center hard courts.

The Filipinos enjoy a 5-1 edge in head-to-head duel with the Pakistanis.

The choice of a soft and slippery surface in PCA's turf is designed to give the Filipinos the edge as the Pakistanis are known to play better on hard courts.

"We still don't count the Pakistanis out because they are known to play better with the crisis against them," said Philippine president Randy Villanueva.

Also playing captain Cris Guerta said that the Filipinos' training off a 4-1 win over Hong Kong in March has played to the squad to the just three weeks.

FRANCO Reyes (18) on his way to a handsome KF3 victory.

Awe-inspiring driving gives Reyes Round 6 KF3 crown

FRANCO VICTOR PIUS REYES FOLLOWED up his dominant showing in Manila by taking the Junior KF3 class in Round Six of the Rogers 100 Series Championship at the Carmona Circuit in Philippine countryside.

The 13-year-old Reyes of Jet Racing Team Indonesia came from behind to beat Jennifer Tanoesoedibjo and pole-sitter Frédéric Bruno of Kryptek R2R in the 25-lap race sponsored by the Philippine Gaming and Amusement Corporation (Pagcor) Brand Hero.

Although starting fifth, Reyes slowly worked his way to the front after a number passing three other drivers and Bruno with no room to go.

Bruno rallied under tremendous pressure and came home third behind Tanoesoedibjo.

The victory enabled Reyes to take Bruno's lead in the overall championship to two points, paving the way for an exciting final round at the Carmona Circuit from July 17 to 19.

"My win is concentrated on the chance to get the best fit for me driving style and the track conditions," said Reyes, who earlier registered a first runner-up finish in Manila in Race Five.

The final round coincides with the Asian Karting Open Championship, where the Asia/Oceania Team Series, who makes it unique, leads the overall race in the Junior 125 Open.

"It's going to be tough," said Reyes, noting that he will be up against the best drivers in Asia, including Yuuto Iwasa, Japan, Indonesia, and Malaysia.

"They are very strong and experienced," added Reyes, who enjoyed supreme in the Macau Asian Karting Championship recently.

Steve Silva, Contributor

No stopping King Roger this time

FOR THE SECOND YEAR IN A ROW, some were under-sized to see any great players dog it out in a Wimbledon final for best Swiss Stefan Boris Becker. Really stumped his claim as for worst the greatest player of all time.

Many of us woke up the first day morning exhausted Our wimbledon suffered at least seven round, with Federer looking up the Australian trophy that symbolized his sixth Wimbledon triumph and seventh time high. He bested Andy Roddick in the championship's longest match ever, 16-14 in the deciding set.

Federer is by no means a bad guy. He's a humble champion and a model citizen. But he's also not the most exciting player to watch.

Although I felt for Andy Roddick for the second consecutive year, I have to say that I was extremely impressed by what I saw.

I never thought that the American would be able to produce a consistent, aggressive game to the best, especially against Federer who has a knack for making errors in opponents.

Roddick also showed at one time month, but the spirit of the game seized to the stands and the Centre Court.

"It's going to be tough," said Peter, noting that he will be up against the best drivers in Asia, including Yuuto Iwasa, Japan, Indonesia, and Malaysia.

"They are very strong and experienced," added Reyes, who enjoyed supreme in the Macau Asian Karting Championship recently.

Steve Silva, Contributor

HEART, SOUL, SPORTS

JOHNNY MANALO

of an hour route to Bruno.

He appears to have found resistance when the two dumped his lead and four weeks. His training is now being documented as a really tough regimen, the brains of which we all rate to the test he survived that hard period at Hindelbeden.

Roddick's last year coach, Larry Stepanek, whose specialty is the baseline game, seemed to have helped him mold his game to a high-set level, now that new trainer Jimmy Connors is the brains behind his training.

Before Wimbledon, Andy never seemed to have what it takes to make it through the quarters or semifinals of a Grand Slam tournament. His mental game had always been suspect.

He used to break down somewhere along the way but not at Wimbledon—until my guess is, not in the near future Connor's there to come.

"You know gonna thing in that set?"

I was often asked this question when I was still coaching.

It was asked especially in times when a player I helped coach at the time when he couldn't do the things he usually did, or when he made errors that were seemingly impossible for him to make.

As a coach, I felt that I would be remiss in such that period. The moment you notice a player of deliberately throwing a game, it's consumption to the point that you've lost respect and trust in him.

Whether the motivation is real or not, we can only imagine how he will play again after that tears game.

Thinking one time, I decided point the players in the history of the clubs and viewed his last passing days as an official. Maybe, he was not focused on the day or simply did not play well.

It happens.

But I had a standing agreement with all my players: If I give them advice 5 minutes on the floor, and if they did not show any interest or defense, then, I'm sure, they would have to be replaced.

It's the coach's job to do the most he can to coax and ignite some glee opportunity to all who work hard to play.

However, if there is a exception, it is the management and the league itself that must investigate. They do have some down hard to call wrong games after the conclusion of an investigation.

It's very difficult for a coach to compete his players of flying games while he's watching them.

The human factor is something that all sport fans is entwined with.

Email comments to mmanalo@philstar.com

WWE toughies invade Big Dome tonight

By Cedrik F. Tejon

"THE DRAGON" speaks out against racism and is a power offighters seeing action tonight.

PRO WRESTLING LEGEND RICKY "THE Dragon" Steamboat finds the urge to return to the ring too strong to resist, but the 56-year-old isn't ready for a full-blown comeback just yet.

Still looking trim, Steamboat—whose real name is Richard Henry Blood, and is the "non-wrestling" nickname of four-silver he appeared in as World Wrestling Entertainment (previously known as World Wrestling Federation) returns to the ring tonight after a 13-year hiatus.

"It's a thrill that I get from the time around the world enabled me to continue," Steamboat, who now works as a road agent for the WWE, said yesterday during a round table discussion with select reporters.

"But I'm only going to do this periodically just as long as my body can handle it," said Steamboat, known for his high-risk moves like the crash body drop.

Steamboat's return circumstances when he took "Macho Man" Randy Savage during WrestleMania III before 93,000 fans in the Pontiac Silverdome in Detroit in 1987.

Steamboat is part of the WWE entourage staging "WWE ECW and Smackdown Live in Manila" tonight at the Araneta Coliseum.

It was the moment he'll would do it again, the challenge he would pull it off," said Steamboat, still sporting a ponytail but lower lip-athletic frame accentuated when he was a game veteran for a match recently.

Among the WWE superstars appearing in tonight's night matches are Jeff Hardy, Finy Mysterio, Edge, CM Punk, Chris Jericho, Rene Dupree and Cher Michelle McCool.

Looney Tunes Active! race fires off at Poveda

ACTION IN THE LOONEY TUNES Active! fun run series remains to-day with another banner field expected to participate in the second leg at 10, Bolivo Poveda College driving from corner Pineda street to Ortigas.

The series of fun run event looked off last month at the Marcos Grade School grounds in Emperor Ave., QC where hundreds of kids four to 12 years old and counting took part.

Coach Bio de La Cruz is also conducting a 45-minute running clinic in each of the stops to be highlighted by a fun run on stop 20 at the 3M Mall of Asia featuring 3K and 5K runs and 1-mile handcycle competitions.

Fee for the fun run is pegged at P500 for any of the 3K or 5K runs and P800 for both categories. For kings, log on to www.looneytunesactive.com.ph or visit Mike Park at Bonifacio High Street.

Stop other schools are set to host the event with Claret School of Quezon City singing the race leg on July 11, De La Salle-Zobel (Alabel) facing on July 17 while Mo-nee ongpin the fifth leg on July 19.

Salvador shows way; Miñoza 1 shot off

MIÑOZA

CAGAYAN DE ORO —Elmer Salvador shows three birdies on each nine to shoot a 6-under-par 66 and grab a one-stroke lead over the veteran duo Miñoza and rookie pro Freddie Asanio in the second round of the ICTSI Pueblo de Oro championship.

Always a nontrailer but never a winner in the first six stages of the revival of the local pro circuit, Salvador posted a 36-hole total of 136 after an opening 70 at the Pueblo de Oro Golf and Country Club.

Miñoza, an escapee from the Japan Golf Tour, fired a 69 and caught up with Asanio, who had a 70 at 139 with a round left in this share-for-the-P500,000 top prize.

The 49-year-old Miñoza birdied his last three holes to underscore his status as top favorite while Asanio rallied with a 32 on the back nine to stay on track for a breakthrough win.

Exciting finish expected

An exciting finish, shaped up, however, as five players stood four strokes or less off the lead with Asian circuit veterans Antonio Mojica and Jason Dela Rosa at 140 after scoring 70s.

First-round co-leader Lonel Derafon (+69, with a 72) was unnamed in contention at 141 in a tie with Richard Mathuga (+69) and Jacobinski Jeff).

Rolando Matalog, who opened with a 69 like Derafon and Asanio, cooled off with a 73 for 142 followed by Cavalan Gana, Donnie Torres, Jay Bonzon and Efrem Quiachon at 144.

Marvin Dumandan, the current Order of Merit leader with one win and two runners-up finish, grouped for four with a 75 and fell to joint 19th with 146.

Forty-five players made the cut at 153, including two amateurs in Alexis Walter (79-150) and Jessie Boy Galero (74-152) to the PGA Philippines Tour co-sanctioned by International Container Terminal Services, Inc. (ICTSI).

The event hookers are KD Cave Golf Management, Finest, The Country Club, Solaire, Total, Benilaan Metric Systems, Omnisource and Pepsico. George Llanera, Contributor

CALVIN Abueva and Dave Mapua do a PBSC pananon on Ia. Bendel's Jonny Tajonera who slips while driving in Wednesday's lift. RAFFY ONG

Surging Bombers eye share of lead

By Cedelf P. Tupas

JOSE REGAL SHOOTS FOR A PIECE OF the lead today when the Bombers collide with resident Benilde Apostolic College in the 85th NCAA basketball tournament at the FEATI Pasig V. Arena in San Juan.

Guerrero is at 4 p.m. with the Brothers keenly focused to secure their third straight victory and join San Sebastian on top.

Clashing in the 2 p.m. encounter are Angeles University Foundation and a Mapua side still in search of its first victory.

Last year's losing finalist in four finals, JRU hopes to take the measure of the P3.5M double-bag of Regional Help last Friday in a game where center James Sena tallied 14 points, a season-high 15 rebounds and eight assists.

The Bombers overcame the Letran Knights, 69-66, for their first victory, last coach Aaril Vergara tells reporters in a statement from his squad.

Although the Generals are coming off back-to-back losses, Vergara tells the Bombers should not take them lightly.

"We have to keep our focus," said Vergara-Ilo. "Tuwing may nanapanood, every game would be a final in our campaign."

The Bombers, who will be led by Sena and JM Wilson, are seeking their first season since 1972.

The Pampanga-based Lyceo Jones are hoping to follow up their 90-75 conquest of the Greenhills Jet Member.

"We hope to win our first win in the NCAA would be a start of something big for us," ALP coach Ato Gerson said.

Aaron Gaston, who recorded 29 points against the Generals, and PA Jun power forward Mon Causey are expected to lead the Danes' drive.

Rookies galore in 72nd UAAP

By Jasmine W. Payo

JUNIORS PHILIPPINE YOUTH TEAM members and high school stars lead over 40 rookies set to debut in the 72nd UAAP men's basketball tournament starting tomorrow.

Prominent locally for Eastern 72 will debut eight rookies headed by former national youth star Ryan Buen Garcia and Skyscraper Brandon, a 6-foot-4 forward from Cebu.

Just like the Tamaraws, hall of the University of Santo Tomas' 16-man roster will be composed of freshmen, including possible center Jude Tang, the son of 16-per Alvin Teng who averaged over 30 points for Xavier.

But La Salle boasts the strongest rookie class with six scouts led by last year's NCAA juniors Finals MVP Arvin Bringas and Four national youth team members.

The 6-foot-3 Bringas will be joined by former San Sebastian teammate Yeo Jim Andrada and national players Joseph Yeboboe, Jed Mendoza, former IAAP juniors MVP Tata Mascara, the nephew of ex-pro Ric-ric Marata, and Gabriel Banal, son of former Junior Champion coach Joel Banal.

"We're a very young team right now, it reminds me of our 2003 team," said Ateneo coach Norman Black.

"Some of our rookies played well in the preseason, but the UAAP is a different level, so let's see how they'll do in a few games," said Tamaraws coach Glenn Capacio.

Barely balancing with its lineup, defending champion Ateneo only has former Rabbit Aaron Thorpe and Frank Golla, also a national youth team member, and Benedict Lustestica for Chance in the new lines.

"Wan of our fair-starters are back," Ateneo coach Norman Black said.

Already half of National University's rookie lineup, including Junior Slotter Jeric Teng, Jayjay Iñigo and Joseph Yeo is another national youth core.

"We lost the whole core, this is a brand new team," said Bulldogs mentor Manny Dandan.

Last year's UAAP juniors MVP Mark Barroca of Adamson and La Salle duo Jason Ibañez Mister Royce have graduated by the Philippines' five seasons.

University of the East's three rookies include Rookie Jhun Jay Semisle, while Adamson rewarded only the pair of Rookie Rene Calvento and Eric Ianson Cawaran.

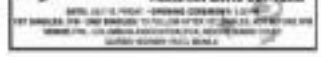
ABS-CBN to air games on high definition

LOCAL SPORTS FINALLY ENTER THE DIGITAL era as ABS-CBN begins its high-definition (HD) test broadcast of the UAAP basketball games in overseas and the NCAA on Monday on Balo 4D (SkyCable Channel 98).

ABS-CBN Sports head Peter Musngi said it will only be a matter of time before the network starts airing boxing, billiards, and even non-basketball games of UAAP and the NCAA in HD.

"With HDTV, local viewers can now experience what sports fans around the world already enjoy—wide-screen and crystal-clear picture quality, multi-motion, and digital sound," said Musngi.

For inquiries on HDTV, call 4912000.



Rodriguez, 2 other Pinay golfers advance to q'finals

DEFENDING CHAMPION CYRA RODRIguez handled out two rivals Wednesday to reach the quarterfinals of the PAGA (Pacific Northwest Golf Association) Women's Amateur Championship at the Arbitrabell Golf Club in Molalla, Oregon.

Rodriguez, 17, whipped Brittany Wilcox, 4 and 3, in the last-30 match, then overcame ICTSI teammate Jacob Abalos, 2 and 1, in the afternoon's concluding matches to beat Debbie in the quarterfinals along with fellow PGP bets Dottie Ardina and Gillian Bardo.

Ardina downed Kelsey Johnson, 5 and 4, then booted out Kitty Nudd, 3 and 2, to average a duel with Lin Hsu-yin for a spot in the semifinals.

Ardina, the top ICTSI bet who still chase to her title bid in the PWPGA Rotation Championship two weeks ago, survived two challengers, topping Summer Smith in the first round, 1-up, then outlasting Amanda Jacobs of Oregon in the afternoon, 2-up.

But she advanced against Bardo, who posted a 5-and-3 rout of Nicole Collaco and a 3-and-2 win over Jacqueline Oben.

The 15-year-old Ardina will try to cruise to the semis over Bardo following her victories last month in PP Amateur at Sandridge.

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MANY NEW ARRIVALS FROM JAPAN

Reality hoops stakes ₱200,000

THE MAIDEN EDITION OF THE CLEAR MEN Fortes League, a reality basketball show set to premiere on Sunday on CSI 9 and Basketball TV, will stake a ₱200,000 prize to the grand winners.

The winner will come from the 10 teams consisting of its players each that qualified during the previewed two-semester staged cable unbroadcasts.

The show, which features aspiring players undergoing skills challenges, that will run for 13 weeks will premiere on Sunday night.

Hosting the show is former boxer one and current PCP national pool champion Cris Ta and Sergio Paras, who returns to only player to win the PBA Most Valuable Player and Rookie of the Year awards in the same season (1995).

Joining the two super is former UAAP coaching reporter Sharon Tio of De La Salle.

Cedelf P. Tupas

'WT] Special 2' up next in Makati

AT LEAST 10 DETHRONABLE EXPECTED TO DEA ACTION in the WT] Special Part II 3-Cock Derby on Monday at the Makati Coliseum.

The first WT] 3-cocker held June 29 drew 42 entries.

The "open guaranteed" format will be retained same for Monday's derby, which has an entry fee of P1,000, according to promoters Lito Sotiago, Rudy Talusi and the WT] group of PCU.

Meanwhile, Pepito Ngo (Fatima variety) emerged as 2009 Cocker of the Mat ng Pinoy Cockers Association of the Philippines after last Monday's derby.

60 fights today in Pasay cockfest

VETERANS SABONG CHALLENGER DANNY AGUILAR bounces a rough field of some 60 participants seeking action today in a cockpit derby at the Pasay City Cockpit.

Aguilar is bucking the wheels of fortune in a cock pulse of more than P200,000. Entry fee is P5,000.

Only 10 more fights will be finished, according to PCC pit managers Eric Asis Dona and Sidney Shaw.

SPORTS

Jayjay, Reyes may miss Jones Cup

By Marong R. Castillo

NO NEED TO PANIC. NOT YET, ANYWAY.

National team coach Yeng Guiao is taking that approach at the moment, as could the injured Jaypee Helterbrand and Ryan Reyes declare that they won't be able to play for the country in the Fiba Asia Qualifying in Manila, China, early next month.

"Right now, what we would need to know is a medical diagnosis and after that, personal assessment from [Helterbrand and Reyes]," Guiao told the Inquirer yesterday as the possibility that both star point guards might miss the Fiba-hosted event became stronger.

Just hours after being named the PBA season's MVP Wednesday night, Helterbrand watched helplessly from the bench as the dying minutes as the San Miguel Beermen pummeled to nip his fellow-Six Kings, 104-106, to tie the Meralco PBA Hemic Cup title series at 2-all.

Thus Helterbrand ran on the final few minutes or so of that crucial game shown how serious his injury could be.

"If we can't have either one of them for China, then that's the time that we will find talent from the outside [other PBA teams]," Guiao said.

"I secret even pressure them [to play in] the Jones Cup," Guiao added. "The real reason is China, and that's where we need them."

The National team leaves for Taipei on July 16 for the Jones Cup, the tournament that serves as the squad's final preparation for the Fiba Asia event.

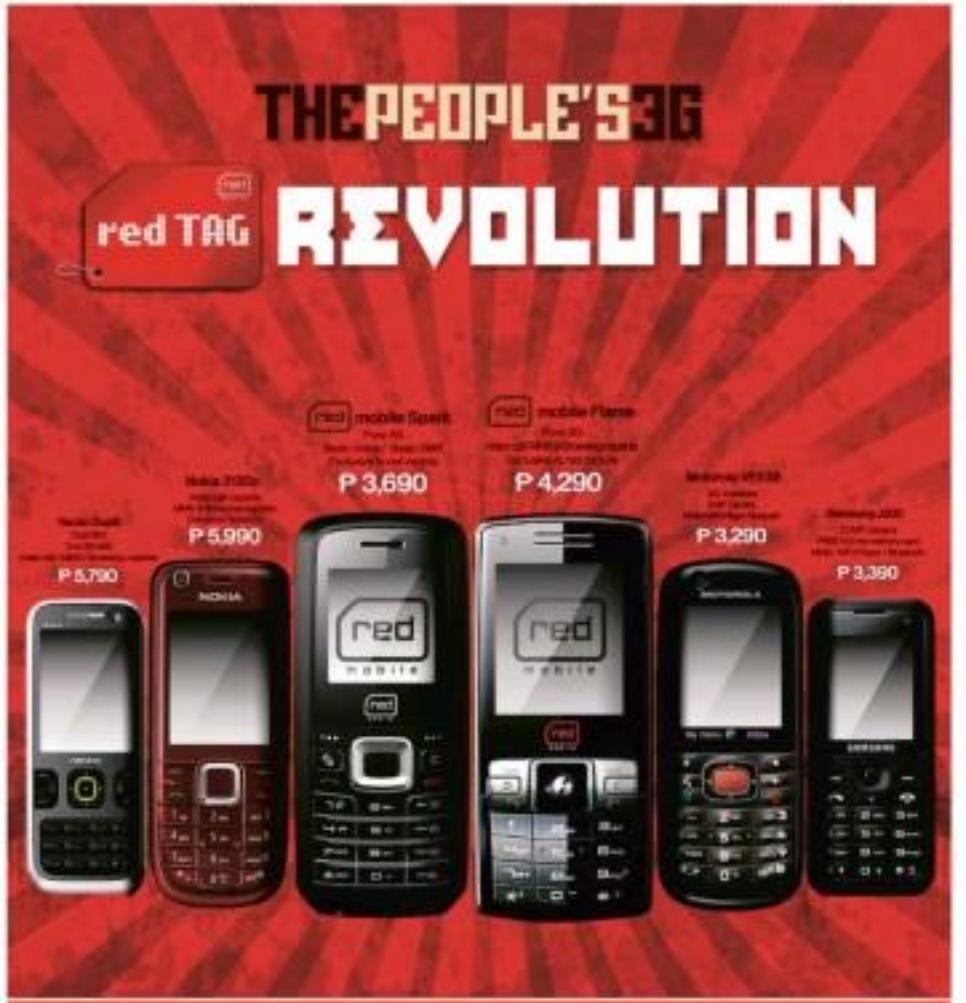
If Helterbrand fails to play in Taipei, the RP squad will miss two point guards as Sta. Lucia's Reyes is also on the injured list. Their absence would leave Willie Miller of Alaska and PBA Rookie of the Year Gabe Norwood as the squad's only quarterbacks.

Though Norwood and Miller played the point in the Philippines' four three games at the Southeast Asian Basketball Association championship in Indonesia last month, the value of a Helterbrand or a Reyes careening fast-break against tougher foes is unquestionable.

Both Norwood and Miller are not natural point guards.

The country opens its campaign in the nine-team, triple round-robin Jones Cup against Jordan on July 16.

The Nationals will take on Chinese Taipei A next day Kazakhstan on July 20, Japan on July 21, Lebanon on July 22 and South Korea on July 23, Chinese Taipei B on July 25 and Iran on July 26.



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'Wish for round butt nearly killed me'

Woman trader sues Belo Group over butt augmentation procedure

By Nanjo C. Esmaja

A 40-YEAR-OLD BUSINESSWOMAN CONFINED AT ST. Luke's Medical Center (SLMC) in Quezon City has filed a malpractice suit against the Belo Medical Group (BMG) over two butt augmentation procedures that she claimed nearly killed her and could leave her deformed for life.

"I trusted her [when she said] the procedure was safe and would give me a permanent round butt but [instead], I narrowly escaped death," Acerina Herrin said, referring to Dr. Vicki Belo, BMG medical director.

The malpractice suit against Belo was filed with the National Bureau of Investigation, Herrin said, adding that she was waiting for the results of the bureau's investigation.

Contacted for comment, Leah Salonga, BMG media affairs, said in a statement, "We have yet to receive a formal complaint from the patient. In the meantime, however, we have begun to study the details of the treatment that was done on the patient from years ago."

Herrin, a resident of Ochoa, Quezon City, told the Inquirer during an interview in her hospital room yesterday that she has been in and out of the hospital since May 30.

She added that she was under the care of several doctors, "an infectious disease specialist, cardiologist, pulmonary specialist, surgeon, nutritionist and a therapist."

According to Scott, her problems started on May 30 when she woke up and found she couldn't move her lower body. She also had a fever and her buttocks were inflamed and painful.

WOMAN A22

DID YOU KNOW

IS MAY 1998, after the Kilusang had been exposed, Andres Bonifacio and other revolutionary leaders held a meeting in the middle of the Pasig River, with their boats tied together, to avoid Spanish surveillance.

Cyril L. Bautista
Joyce Rosario

Underground highway system on Roxas Boulevard proposed

By Katrina L. Abaw

THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC Works and Highways (DPWH) has proposed the construction of an underground highway system on Roxas Boulevard to create more roads without destroying the historical landmarks in the area.

According to the DPWH, traffic flow on Roxas Boulevard, which connects Manila to the southern part of the metropolis, including Coastal Road and R-10, has exceeded its 10 kilometer per hour during rush hours.

The agency also noted that more roads would be needed to anticipate of an increase in the number of vehicles passing through the area in the next few years.

More vehicles by 2015

DPWH data showed that by 2015, the population in Manila could reach 25.7 million without considering imported cars to come to 2.3 million vehicles.

Public Works Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. said the Metro Manila Tunnel Expressway (MMTEE) would preserve the iconic view on Roxas Boulevard and historical sites like Palacio del Gobernador, calling it a "win-win solution."

Ebdane, however, added that they were still proposing the project and that it would probably take five years before construction could begin.

Integrated expressway

The MMTEE—which is composed of an arterial road and an integrated expressway system—is expected to provide motorists and trucks better access to Ninoy Aquino International Airport, Roxas Boulevard, Coastal Road and Intramuros in Manila.

DPWH officials said that under the project, an 8.8-km long tunnel would be built from Manila International Airport Road to P. Burgos Street on Roxas Boulevard with a total cost of P9.9 billion.

During the second phase, a 10.6-km long tunnel would be constructed, extending from P. Burgos to the North Luzon Expressway through Tarlac, Pampanga and Valenzuela.

'Sisi's' death blamed on lack of care; Peta pushes zoo closure

By Tina G. Santos

Sisi's quiet last life in a cage during her stay in Manila Zoo.

MEMBERS OF THE animal rights group People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (Peta) yesterday renewed their call for the closure of Manila Zoo and demanded Gardenia following the death of Sisi, the lone Asian elephant.

Dr. Donald Mendenhall, the zoo's chief veterinarian, said Sisi, a female orangutan, about 50 to 55 years old, died on June 21 of multiple organ failure due to metabolic disease.

"There were rumors all over her body which affected her organs," Mendenhall told the Inquirer.net phone interview.

But in his 20-page report on Sisi's death was "an indication of how animals have been left in deterioration health without proper veterinary care."

"Because of lack of healing and vaccines, the zoo's Sisi developed a disease aggravated and conditions for animals have grown steadily worse," said Peta director Jason Baker.

However, Mendenhall assured Peta that the facility has been looking after the animals in its care.

"Sisi even attended her life expectancy which could mean that she was well taken care of," the veterinarian added.

Peta, meanwhile, appealed to Mayor Alfredo Lim to attend to his plan of acquiring new animals for the Zoo.

Sad life, lonely death

"We believe that instead of incurring new animals, the zoo should shut its doors for good," Baker said. "The best way to help animals is to protect their native habitats, not to put more of them behind bars. Sisi's selfish and lonely death underscores the urgency of sending other animals at the Manila Zoo to sanctuaries and closing the doors on facilities around the city."

Upon learning of the orangutan's death, Peta expressed its concern about the well-being of the other animals, particularly Mali, the elephant, at Manila Zoo.

In their request letter, users of the open letter hope or the zoo would cease from its use their space hundreds of kilometers, but the center says resources only 0.001 square kilometers. Pets could.

"But it would," many animals at Manila Zoo have been observed exhibiting aberrant behavior," it added.

MCIPO Director Chief Supt. Roberto Rosales (center) and Chief Insp. Rose de Jesus show to media on Thursday the seized fake peso bills worth P2.1 million.

Crane falls off Pasig building, hits car

By Beverly T. Mateo

A 6-FOOT TOWER CRANE BEING USED in a building under construction in Ortigas, Pasig City accidentally broke and fell on the ground yesterday afternoon damaging a car and almost killing an infant.

But aside from the damaged car, no one was hurt in the accident, according to officials from Barangay San Antonio in Pasig City, who responded to calls for assistance.

The crane was being used in the construction of the East of Galleria building along Tropa Road in the Ortigas Center when it broke and fell at around 1:30 p.m.

Jessel Clemente, a member of the mobile unit of Barangay San Antonio, told the Inquirer that the crane knocked down a high tension electrical wire, an elevator post and damaged a car that was passing by on the road.

Fortunately, a baby who happened to be inside the damaged Mazda 323 was unhurt in the accident. Half of the car's roof, the rear windshield and trunk were damaged, said Clemente.

The construction site had a containment net to protect passing cars from falling debris but it gave way to the weight of the heavy crane.

P2.1 M worth of fake bills seized by cops in Las Piñas

By Allison W. Lopez

SIX ALLEGED MEMBERS OF A SYNDICATE that produced fake money were caught by Manila policemen on Wednesday with P2.1 million worth of counterfeit bills.

National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) director Chief Supt. Roberto Rosales, told reporters in Camp Bagong Diwa yesterday that five members of the group were arrested in Las Piñas City after a stakeout while the police had apprehended the sixth among fake money fed them to the apartment where the group was staying.

They were identified as Francis Suicos, 53, of Antonio Jan, Antipolo City; Bernardo Cruz, 50, of Santiago, Quezon; Lester Sadornal, 36, of Bangkal, Makati City; Jhon Caporado, 25, driver, of San Pedro, Laguna; Jaypee Cruz, 34, of Tagaytay; Bartolo Cabanatan City; and Antonio Lanuzo, 56, of Bacood, Cavite.

The six were charged with violations of articles 166 and 168 of the Revised Penal Code for proliferation and possession of counterfeit Philippine currency.

Rosales said that Cruz was the first to be arrested after they received complaints that he paid for food he bought from an eatery on M.H. del Pilar Street with a fake P1,000 bill.

Three more fake bills were found in his possession.

Cruz later told the police that a group in Las Piñas City sold him the fake money at P500 for each P1,000 bill.

The Special Task Group of the Manila Police District then raided the hideout where they uncovered front Suicos a briefcase that contained 14 bundles of fake P1,000 bills.

The police, however, failed to seize any gadgets used in making the counterfeit money.

Rosales urged the public to be more careful in handling money, saying the fake bills can be circulated to public markets or gadgets.

"It genuine bill has a thicker texture and has two lines that can be seen against the light. We should learn how to distinguish it from the fake one," the NCRPO chief said.

He also asked people not to patronize the syndicate by buying counterfeit money because they could end up in jail.

Hayden's ma reacts to Katrina's libel suit

'SHE ACTS COULD NOT BE DEFENDED'

THE MAN WHO KNOWS Elsie, mother of controversial romantic doctor Hayden Kho, said in his counter-affidavit which she filed yesterday in reply to the libel case filed against her by actress Katrina Halili.

Halili filed the suit after Ms Elsie alleged during a television interview that the actress was a drug user.

The interview was conducted at the height of the sex video scandal involving her son and Halili.

Ms Elsie said in her affidavit that the information about Halili being a drug user was widely talked to her by Hayden while he was recuperating from a suicide attempt.

"I had no reason to doubt him considering the circumstances surrounding his confession of the facts to me. It could not be said that I made these statements knowing that they were false. Hence, my acts could not be deemed malicious," she said. Atty. M. Aurelio Lichauco argued that the right suit is libeled stated, " Manila said.

"I already lost some income and I have spent more than P3-4 million for my medical expenses and I still have yet to hear from them," she said, referring to BMC.

She added that her future managers as well with Dr. Philip Bonoy, PMG resident medical director, and his advisers for Search to recover the lost fund, go to the Sole class where she would receive help.

Woman trader sues Belo Group over butt augmentation procedure

9 newspage A13

A visit to the doctor showed that her buttocks were full of pus, a condition linked to the fat-drug that had been injected into the area when the underwent butt augmentation in 2002 and 2003 at the Belo Clinic on Estrella Manila.

During subsequent visits, Manalo said her condition worsened as the pus protrusion difficulty in breathing and her blood pressure became erratic.

Since then, she has undergone at least six operations to drain the pus and the hydrogel from her buttocks, a procedure which, according to her doctors, must be done gradually.

Just like Rosanna's

Manalo, who owns a production company and small subdivision, alleged, said that she went to see Belo about undergoing the procedure after noting actress Rosanna Roces' pound buttocks during an awards show in 2002.

"When I consulted Vicki about my desire of having the same butt like Rosanna's, she said it could be done and never told me of the side effects of the procedure," she claimed.

She added that Belo herself, surrounded by other doctors, showed her what would be done to her buttocks.

"Vicki assured me for at least five minutes and then ushered me to a Dr. Cayetano," Manalo said.

The fat- enhancement procedure, she added, cost her around P250,000.

"The first time in 2003, I was not satisfied with the result but since my butt

"HOT" HEAT SEIZED

A mall of the National Meat Inspection Service examines part of the two tons of dressed meat, locally known as "karne," seized early Thursday from the Balintawak Market in Quezon City.

Cops recover 2 stolen vans from warehouse in Bulacan

By Nancy C. Carvajal

POLICE HAVE ARRESTED TWO suspected members of a car-selling syndicate operating in Luzon and recovered two stolen vehicles from a warehouse in Bulacan, a police official said.

Chief Insp. Dante Amores, chief of the Quezon City Police District Anti-Carnapping Unit, yesterday identified those arrested as Mar Reyes, 38, and Rene Jacko, 28, both residents of Barangay Sto. Cristo.

Amores said the two are members of the Midnight car theft syndicate which the police had been trying to bust for months.

"We are now conducting follow-up operations against the group in Metro Manila, particularly in Quezon City," he said.

During the operation conducted on Wednesday, Amores said they were able to recover two stolen Isuzu Sportivo vans.

He said both vehicles were stolen in Quezon City on Tuesday. One of them was stolen while parked along Lantana Street, Barangay Sto. Rosario, while the other was stolen along Congo extension Street.

He added that the suspects are also into stolen-car and have sufficient knowledge about cars.

Revilla backs 50% cut in SLEx, Skyway toll rates

SEN. RAMON "Bong" Revilla Jr. yesterday announced his support for the proposed 50 percent toll discount for motorists using the South Luzon Expressway (SLEx) and Skyway in a statement. Revilla said it was only proper that the toll fall rate in SLEx and Skyway be cut because of the inconvenience in rehabilitation has been causing motorists for the past months. "When the widening and road construction, toll rate should be discounted until the full rehabilitation of SLEx and Skyway is completed and smooth and speedy travels resumed. It is unfair to pay the full price for a still half-baked service," he said.

MetroBriefs

Public consultation over proposed parking fees set

LACSO's of various sectors in Quezon City will attend a public consultation meeting to protest the proposed ordinance (SB 1644) to impose parking fees in "places of special interest" in the city, by chairman, businessman Edwin Rodriguez, adviser of the Tomas Morato Business Club and retired engineer, said the meeting will be held at 10 a.m. at Quezon Hall and Civil on Tuesday, Businessmen, civic-based leaders, other citizens and civil society members are expected to attend the meeting. The measure which seeks to impose parking fees in certain streets in Quezon City was proposed by Councilor Jesus Suntay. But those opposed to the proposal claimed Suntay did not hold any public consultation or conduct any study on the measure that is expected to result to an additional income for the city government of P2 to 3 billion a year.

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China keeps tight grip on strife-torn Urumqi

URUMQI—RIOT POLICE AND soldiers kept a strong presence in China's Urumqi city on Thursday after days of bloodshed, as calm in the restive provincial capital's businesses reopened to tentative signs of normalcy.

In one of the most striking examples of a city trying to heal following unrest that began on Sunday and left 156 people dead, security forces cordoned their main portion of Han Chinese and Muslim Uighur districts.

Urumqi's mayor said late Wednesday the city was back under control, after thousands of Han Chinese roamed the streets wearing vengeance and to defend themselves in response to initial violence reportedly blamed on Uighurs.

There were no signs of the vigilantes, many of whom had been carrying poles, shovels and other makeshift weapons, and public buses as well as taxis were again plying the city's main thoroughfares.

But those through more shops had also reopened after a three-day government-mandated business closure, many were still deserted and residents remained reportedly doubtful that life would return to normal any time soon.

"I don't think it returns to normal with so many soldiers," said a Han woman surnamed Li in central Urumqi. "I've counted 41 military trucks so far and more trucks just came by."

And the big bazaar in the main Uighur district remained shut, with Uighurs saying the chance was another example of the different rules they have to live by compared with the Han Chinese.

"They said we could reopen after three days. But today is the fourth day and they are not letting us open," said a clothing shop owner.

Meanwhile, although the number of security forces on the streets were not nearly as visible in the week, the police armed with batons and helmets were still very visible throughout the city of 2.3 million people.

Urumqi is the capital of Xinjiang, whose eight million Uighurs have long complained about discrimination and repression under Chinese rule—accusations the government denies.

Earlier dozens instigating the protests said state police on Wednesday that the death toll from the unrest was far higher than the figure of 156 given by Chinese authorities.

The vice president of the Uighur World Congress, Asgar Can, put the death toll from the unrest at between 600 and 800, citing witnesses in Urumqi based on eyewitness accounts of the violence.

Chinese President Hu Jintao abandoned a Group of Eight summit in Italy and returned to China on Wednesday to deal with the crisis, in what observers said was an unprecedented move.

However by Thursday authorities he, per say other senior leader from the Chinese government in Beijing, had announced publicly on the crisis.

The situation in Xinjiang continued to raise concern abroad, particularly in Muslim countries.

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan called on China Wednesday to arrange a quick end to the "atrocity" in Xinjiang and said his nation would bring the matter to the agenda of the UN Security Council. AFP

A HEAVILY armed paramilitary policeman patrols a neighborhood in Urumqi, western China's Xinjiang province on July 9 after days of ethnic violence that killed 156 people and injured hundreds. AP

China arrests Rio Tinto employees on spy charge

BEIJING—FOUR EMPLOYEES of Anglo-Australian miner Rio Tinto Ltd. have been arrested on charges of stealing state secrets, China's foreign ministry said on Thursday, following their detention amid concentrate iron ore price talks.

A foreign ministry spokesperson, Qin Gang, confirmed those detained were employees of Rio's Shanghai office and included an Australian citizen. Qin declined to give any other details or say when the Australian, Stern Hu, might be allowed to talk to his country's diplomats.

"Hu is suspected of stealing China's state secrets," Qin told reporters at a regular briefing. "Authorities will deal with the case according to law."

The detentions Sunday came as Rio, the world's third-largest mining company, seeks to end negotiations for global iron ore supplies to price talks with Chinese steel mills. But there has been no indication whether the row is linked to the negotiations.

China's export spying and sustained security fever give neither foreign nor local businesses in the country much room to prosecute. The government treats a sweeping array of economic and other data as state secrets. The maximum penalty for a conviction on espionage charges under Chinese law is life in prison. A formal notice to China means an almost automatic conviction.

The Chinese-born Hu is general manager of Rio's Chinese iron ore business, according to the Australian government. It says the three other detainees are Chinese nationals.

Meanwhile, a Chinese steel executive who had "close contact" with Hu has been detained by Beijing police, the newspaper 21st Century Business Herald reported Thursday.

Tan Yixin, general manager of Shougang International Trade & Technology Corp., overseas iron ore purchases, the Herald reported, citing unidentified sources. It gave no indication whether the two cases were linked.

A spokesperson for Shougang Group, parent company of Tan's employer, said he could not confirm whether Tan was detained. He would give only his surname, Bu. The foreign ministry and Beijing police did not immediately respond to questions by phone and fax.

Australian diplomats are pressing China for details on Hu and details of his case, according to Australian Foreign Minister Stephen Smith. Under a consular agreement, China has a week to respond and Smith said diplomats expect to see him on Friday or Saturday. AP

Cyber attacks may not have come from North Korea

By Clive Goldwin and Jim Christie

SAN FRANCISCO—CYBERSECURITY analysts raised doubts on Wednesday that the North Korean state launched recent attacks on US government and South Korean websites, saying instead the spate of problems could be the villains.

More than two dozen websites in the United States and South Korea, including that of the US State Department, were attacked in recent days.

South Korea's spy agency has said North Korea may be behind the attacks, while the US government has said it is too soon to make such claims—and Internet security experts agree.

The implications of a state-sponsored attack are severe, said SecureWorks' Mark Hatch, who led the US Department of Justice computer crimes unit from 1982 to 1991.

"There's no difference between dropping a logic bomb and dropping a 500 bomb in other kind of war," he said, he added that while North Korea could have been behind the ransomers, they did not appear to be coming from computers physically located in the technologically Asian country.

"This is not something that your average script kiddy can do. On the other hand it doesn't require it to be state-sponsored," Hatch said.

The relatively simple "denial of service" attacks aim to overwhelm computers with requests for information. They are designed primarily to disrupt systems rather than penetrate and obtain data, analysts said. They are also difficult to trace.

The attacks could have been a "shot across the bow" by North Korea, the computer equivalent of its recent missile launches, but could also have been conjured up by hackers looking to make quick money or create bragging rights.

They also could mask malicious activity like inserting spyware or malware-computer programs that could later be activated, analysts said.

The attacks began on July 4th, the US Independence Day holiday.

But Rodger Baker, Stratfor's director of East Asia analysis, pointed out the date is also close to the anniversary of the death of North Korea's founder Kim Il Sung and North Korean missile launches, which might lend some credence to speculation that the country was behind the attacks.

Other analysts shied away from pinpointing South Korea and said the attacks would be th naturally motivated.

"There's a trillion dollars in economic losses sustained due to hacking every year, not just financial data theft but also industrial espionage," Cam Stuttgen, Technologies' San Jose-based said.

"You're seeing a massive community of movements for hire who are leveraging their computer skill sets, particularly in this global recession, the kind of IT professionals or reverse data are leveraging their attack capabilities and their technological experience to break in and out of systems," Analysts struggled to explain why North Korea would launch such an unsophisticated attack. Despite its financial straits, the country has a cyber warfare center and a "hacking academy" Defectors said.

"In our experience, state-sponsored events are under the radar," said Stratfor executive Mike Stolle.

"If you were going to launch a sophisticated attack, you wouldn't want people sniffing this kind of attack. This woke up all the network defenders and you lose the element of surprise," said James Lewis, a fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Reuters

Bombings kill at least 41 in Iraq

MOSUL, IRAQ—BOMBS IN Baghdad and northern Iraq killed at least 41 people and wounded more than 80 on Thursday, police said, just over a week after US troops handed security in city centers to local forces.

Two suicide attacks in Tal Afar, a town 420 kilometers northwest of Baghdad that is mainly home to minority Turkmens, killed 34 people and wounded 80.

One suicide bomber detonated an explosives vest, followed by another suicide attack just as people responded to the first, said a police official in the area. However, no group has taken advantage of tensions between Sunni Arabs and ethnic Kurds to maintain a campaign of violence.

In Baghdad, 7 people were killed and 20 were wounded by two bomb blasts in a market in Sadr City, a poor, Shi'ite Muslim area of the Iraqi capital.

Two other suicide bombs had been placed among rubbish piles in the popular Sadr City market. Reuters Television footage showed the bloodstained interior of a minivan damaged in the attack.

The bloodshed following the US withdrawal in 2009 is sharply, but relatively low and religiously mixed Marneth province in Iraq's north is still wracked by violence.

US officials describe Marneth and its capital Mosul as a key stronghold for al-Qaeda and other Sunni Arab insurgents.

The province is also the scene of growing tensions between Arabs and minority Kurds, who controlled Marneth's government until Arabs took charge in provincial polls in January.

On Wednesday evening, two car bombs exploded within minutes of each other in Mosul, killing 14 people and wounding 53.

There have been a steady drumbeat of attacks in the city, many of them targeting Iraqi police and soldiers, since US combat troops withdrew from urban centers on June 30.

Such attacks raise questions about whether Iraqi forces can fend off violence as they take the lead role in security.

The US pullback from city and town centers last month was a milestone in the plan for a gradual withdrawal of all US forces from Iraq by the end of 2011.

While found 2006 the sectarian violence has failed, simmering disputes between the Shi'ite Arab-led government in Baghdad and Kurds, who want to extend the borders of their semi-autonomous northern region and take greater control of oil resources, are viewed by many as the country's next major threat. Reuters

JAPANESE ROYALTY IN CANADA. Japanese Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko examine a kayak in Ottawa on July 8. They are on a 11-day visit to Canada. AP

CIA deceived US Congress for years

WASHINGTON—THE DIRECtor of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Leon E. Panetta, has told Congress' Intelligence Committee in closed-door testimony that the CIA concealed "significant actions" from Congress from 2001 until late last month, seven Democratic committee members said.

In a June 26 letter to Panetta obtaining the testimony, Democrats said that the agency had "misled members" of Congress for eight years about the classified matters, which the letter did not disclose. "This is similar to other disruptions of which we are aware from other recent periods," said the letter, which was made late Wednesday by Rep. Rush D. Holt, D-N.J., one of the signers.

In an interview, Holt declined to reveal the nature of the CIA's alleged deceptions. But he said, "We wouldn't be doing this over a trivial matter."

The chairmen of the House Intelligence Committee, Rep. Silvestre Reyes, D-Texas, referred to Panetta's disclosure in a letter to the committee's ranking Republican, Rep. Peter Hoekstra of Michigan, Congressional Quarterly reported on Wednesday. Reyes wrote that the committee "has been misled, has not been provided full and complete notifications, and (in at least one occasion) was affirmatively lied to."

The questions of the CIA's candor with the congressional oversight committees have been largely disputed since Speaker Nancy Pelosi increased the agency of lying to disclose in a 2002 briefing that it had used waterboarding against a terrorism suspect. Pelosi said the agency routinely misled Congress, though she later said she intended to fault the Bush administration rather than career intelligence officials.

Since then, Republicans have called Pelosi's complaint an unwarranted attack on the integrity of conscientious officers, and have demanded an investigation. Democrats have rebuffed the demand.

In a statement Wednesday night, a CIA spokesperson, George Little, noted that the agency "took the initiative to notify the oversight committees" about the panel's failures. He said the agency "has no higher priority than keeping Congress fully and currently informed."

New York Times News Service

G-8, emerging powers fail to agree on emissions cuts

L'AQUILA, ITALY—THE WORLD'S biggest developing nations, led by China and India, refused on Wednesday to commit to specific goals for slashing their emitting gases by 2050, underscoring the drive to build a global consensus by the end of the year to reverse the threat of climate change.

As US President Barack Obama arrived in Italy to attend the eight-nation Group of Eight (G-8) powers' talks, negotiators for 17 leading polluters abandoned targets in a draft agreement ahead of meetings here. But negotiators embraced a goal of preventing temperatures from rising more than 2.0 degrees Fahrenheit and developing nations agreed to make "meaningful" if unspecified reductions in emissions.

The mixed results underscored the challenges for Obama as he tries to use his first summit meeting of the Group of Eight (G-8) powers to win progress toward a climate treaty. With the ups pending by more aggressive action and Congress throwing a more restrained approach, Obama is navigating complicated political currents at home and abroad. His current bring strong developing countries, so climate deal will be effective.

Obama put climate change front and center by scheduling a meeting on the sidelines of the main summit talks on Thursday and inviting nine other nations that, along with the G-8, pump out 80 percent of the world's greenhouse gases. US officials called the results a step forward in the arduous process intended to lead to a worldwide climate treaty at a Copenhagen conference in December.

But the impasse over the 2050 targets demonstrated once again the most vexing problem in crafting a climate consensus.

While the richest countries over time produced the bulk of the pollution blamed for climate change, the fast-growing developing countries are producing increasing volumes of gases, making them crucial to any solution. But the developing countries argue there is little use of poverty should not be halted in by the damage done by industrial countries.

As various sides tried to craft an agreement to sign on Thursday, those tensions matched the specific goals sought by the United States and Europe. The draft agreement called for worldwide emissions to be cut by 50 percent by 2050, with industrial countries cutting theirs by 80 percent.

New York Times News Service

The WORLD

HONDURAS' interim President Roberto Micheletti

OUSTED Honduran President Manuel Zelaya

Honduras rivals to talk

But Zelaya, Micheletti appear unyielding

SAN JOSE, COSTA RICA—Veteran mediator and Nobel peace laureate President Oscar Arias of Costa Rica hosts talks on Thursday between the rivals for power in Honduras, but neither side seems willing to yield following last month's coup.

Bolstered by world condemnation of his ouster in the June 28 coup, Manuel Zelaya says he wants those who toppled him to give up power in 24 hours to allow his reinstatement in the Central American nation, one of the poorest in the Americas.

But the interim president who replaced him, Roberto Micheletti, installed by Honduras' Congress after the coup, has said he will not negotiate Zelaya's return on behalf of state.

He says the deposed president, who had angered his country's traditional ruling elite with a political shift to the left, will face charges if he returns for illegally trying to lift limits on presidential terms in violation of the constitution.

The conflicting positions appear to bode ill for speedy resolution to the political crisis that has gripped Honduras since the coup, raising tensions in Central America and posing a test for US President Barack Obama's Latin American policy.

Obama, apparently looking to wipe clean Washington's past record of supporting often bloody military coups and regimes in Latin America when it suited US interests, has condemned Zelaya's ouster and backed Arias' mediation between the rival sides.

On the eve of the talks, the US Embassy in Tegucigalpa said Washington had suspended $16.5 million in military assistance programs to Honduras.

Micheletti's caretaker administration called the US move "unnecessary and unfair."

The US Embassy said a further $180 million in US aid for Honduras would also be at risk, but said humanitarian assistance to the Honduran people such as food aid, AIDS prevention and help for children, would continue.

Zelaya, arriving in Costa Rica on the eve of the talks, appeared to leave little margin for flexible dialogue by dismissing Micheletti as a "criminal" and demanding his reinstatement in 24 hours that he was getting back power to him.

"I want to hear what that coup monger [Micheletti] is going to say here in San Jose," Zelaya, sporting his trademark white cowboy hat, told reporters.

Late on Wednesday, a spokesperson for Micheletti accused exiled allies in Nicaragua, a leftist ally of Zelaya, of refusing permission for Micheletti's plane to fly over Nicaraguan territory on the way to Costa Rica. A similar military offensive in Nicaragua foiled the secretive "cruddy hike."

Despite the apparent lack of willingness to concede, Arias, who won a Nobel Peace Prize in 1987 for helping to end civil wars and insurgencies in Central America during the Cold War, has said he hopes to persuade the two sides to reach a settlement.

Observers fear that failure to strike a deal could prompt Zelaya to renew attempts to return to his country or try to stir back power with the help of his supporters and left-wing allies like Venezuela, Cuba and Nicaragua.

Firebrand Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez, who lent Zelaya a plane in which he made an abortive bid to return home on Sunday, has vowed to do everything possible to obtain his reinstatement.

Venezuelan Oil Minister Rafael Ramirez confirmed on Wednesday his country was suspending its supply to Honduras of 20,000 barrels a day of oil, provided under a regional energy alliance called PetroCaribe, until Zelaya was restored as president. Reuters

Blast outside Afghan school kills 25 people

AFGHANISTAN—AN EXPLOSION OUTside a school south of the Afghan capital on Thursday killed at least 25 people, including 13 students, officials said.

It was the latest incident in an escalation of violence across Afghanistan since US Marines launched a new offensive a week ago in the Taliban bastion of Helmand.

That assault, Operation Strike of the Sword, is the first major operation under US President Barack Obama's new regional strategy to defeat the Taliban and stabilize Afghanistan.

The blast happened in Logar province south of Kabul and officials said it was caused by explosives hidden beneath a pile of firewood in the back of a truck which had crashed overnight, prompting speculation they were meant for elsewhere.

Logar police chief Ghulam Mustafa said the truck rolled into a stream between two schools. The blast went off as police checked the abandoned truck in the morning, he said. Reuters

Editor Raul G. Manalo • Assistant Editor Carrie S. Martinez

BUSINESS

ADB sets aside $4.3B in aid for RP

Institution hopes to make a real dent on poverty

By Nestor M. Domingo

THE ASIAN DEVELOPMENT Bank has earmarked at least $4.3 billion in aid for the Philippines through 2012 to push the domestic economy to a "sustained high-growth path."

Steven R. Jain, ADB country director for the Philippines, said in a briefing that disbursements for 2009 alone would likely exceed $1.3 billion.

"Seriously, the ADB (releases) $400 million to $600 million yearly," Jain said. "If at year's account it is over $1bn (double the norm) as the country feels the impact of global economic developments."

Also, an assistance package of between $2 billion and $3 billion for the Philippines covering 2010 to 2012 is now being discussed, Jain said.

He explained that help for the Philippines in 2009 would come in the form of greater support for national budgetary needs, a support facility for efforts to contain the current macro-fiscal slowdown, and allocations for much needed infrastructure.

"The Philippine economy is expected to maintain positive GDP growth in 2009," Jain said. "Due to a domestic development considering that the economies of other countries are contracting."

GDP refers to the total value of goods and services produced and paid for within an economic territory at a given time.

The government reported that in the first quarter, GDP grew by only 0.4 percent compared to the same period in 2008.

Jain said that the ADB's estimate as of March—that the Philippine economy would grow by 2.3 percent this year—"now seems ambitious."

Still, he said, continuing growth in the value of remittances from overseas Fil-

ADB /B

BSP reduces key rates to record low

By Michelle V. Rosa

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS slashed its key policy rates by another 25 basis points yesterday in an effort to further boost the economy amid price cycles seeing that the country will sink into a recession this year.

The latest reduction brought overnight borrowing and lending rates to record lows of 4 percent and 6 percent, respectively.

Along with yesterday's rate cut, the BSP has reduced key policy rates by a total of 2 percentage points since December, when it began easing its monetary policy to counter the effects of macroeconomic downturn.

"The Monetary Board reiterated its resolve to provide support to economic activity to the extent that the inflation outlook allows," BSP Deputy Governor Armando Suntay told reporters in a press conference held after the Monetary Board's meeting.

The BSP said the reduction of policy rates was intended to encourage banks to downsize their lending activities and offset the effects of a crisis now crippling the world economy.

A cut in the BSP's overnight borrowing rate will open banks to engage their funds in lending activities rather than deposit them with the central bank. On the other hand, a cut in the overnight lending rate—the amount charged by the BSP to borrowing banks—will allow these institutions to likewise reduce the lending rates they charge their own borrowers.

Monetary officials said the move to lower interest rates was necessary to spur consumption and investments.

In the first quarter, the economy grew by a mere 0.4 percent—the slowest in 10 years—due to a slowdown in consumption and investments.

The economy's performance in the first quarter, which was below most expectations, prompted the government to cut its growth target for the year to a range of between 0.8 and 1.8 percent. Earlier, the target was set at 3.1 to 4.1 percent.

BSP /B

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■ Meralco shares hit record high /B3
■ RP banking sector seen to remain healthy /B6

CURRENCIES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

Sharon close higher

GPC increases stake in Galoc

Consortium buys out holdings of minority partners

By Amy R. Remo

GALOC PRODUCTION CO. WLL (GPC), operator of the Galoc oil field off Palawan, has raised its stake in Service Contract 14C by 1.93 percent, following the acquisition of interests of its minority partners.

The acquisition has increased the stake of GPC to 59.64 percent from 56.29 percent, said consortium member Otto Energy Ltd.

In a regulatory filing, Otto Energy chief executive officer Neil Moore said that, with the acquisition, the indirect interest of the Australian company in the Galoc project also went up to 18.77 percent.

GPC acquired the interests of minority partners, PetroEnergy Resources Corp. and Nido Gold Resources Corp., apart from that of other partners to the project, Moore said.

"The acquisitions ... is subject to the execution of the formal agreements by all participating joint-venture partners," Moore explained.

Early this month, Nido firm [illegible]

Cadan raising $1.5M for T'Boli project

CADAN RESOURCES CORP. OF CANADA said it was raising $1.5 million for the development of the T'Boli gold-silver deposit and the detailed exploration of surrounding area, as well as for working capital.

Company president and CEO Brett Fraser said in a statement that Cadan was arranging a "non-brokered private placement" consisting of up to 15,000,000 units of company shares at $0.10 per unit. Gross proceeds could reach $1,500,000.

The placement is still subject to regulatory acceptance, Cadan said.

Each unit will consist of one common share of the company and half of one common share purchase warrant. Each whole warrant will entitle the holder to acquire one common share of the company for a period of 24 months at $0.15 per common share.

Cadan said all securities issued in connection with this financing would be subject to a four-month hold period. Rina T. Oh-Sanchez

Stocks that beat the market

MARKET RIDER

Dex Sunseri

TRADERS WHO FOLLOW trends when making their investment decisions find great difficulty when the market is moving sideways, that is why they "stay on the sidelines." This was obviously the reason behind the CycleReader's duration, being a cycle trend follower, is fully divest and completely get out of the market last week. The market had been breaking into small upward and downward swings, which somehow have not fully materialized into a discernible trend.

Some bird must hope, however, can be found at this time. This could be what motivated Traders28 when she chose to open up two more positions last week, having re-visited the method of trading, as declared earlier on, except for her "buy-and-hold" on the stars of market psychology and knowledge on the fundamental values of her stock picks.

Trust Mr. but a similar affection of the market as that of Traders28. But, he has a more concrete technical grasp and judgment on the market. To him, the market is on the accumulation phase. Therefore, it's one of the good times to pick up stocks. He did just that as the virtual game opened up last week for the week.

But what's the use of education is (except when on the doldrums, of course), there are just stocks that can really beat the market. And we don't have to go far to find out. We have a bunch of them in the stock positions held by our virtual players.

Week 5 at the virtual game

Trust Mr. said in his note Monday night, "We can see the market volume is relatively robust and has a shall trading line week which we saw on its volume ... A heterogeneous investment collection should give the RSP a notes for a one cut and will push stock market prices a little bit higher this week. Still, investors are cautious as we saw in the low volume of trade and investors are looking for sub-issues investment like the SOP's [now issue will be in the market this week] and SOS on short-coded terms (S1) also Cialis are a little bit higher compared to the last earlier. Overall, we see equities moving sideways this coming months as what they called 'ghost months' are getting nearer ... before a rally will be seen (support level-2350 and resistance at 2500)."

He gave two standing orders for execution for Tuesday's trading session. These were: "Buy 22,000 shares Ayala Land Inc. (ALI) at P8.20 and 2,500 shares of Alaska Power Corp. (APC) at P5.80 per shares." All orders proved to be valid.

His buy order on ALI was actually an add-on to an existing open position. ALI opened up at the day's high of P8.20, made a low of P8.20 and closed at P8.20.

As for AB it opened up higher at P5.90 but slide to P5.80 and closed at this price.

Adds Sean a first-market read, it looks like a whole team is now behind 'Bait Me. The rest of the market doers should take their cue from this developments ... you can have outside assistance as you do in real trading, for writing your trade in the object of stock investment and trading.

Bottom line spin

Based on his team's reading of the market, ALI is "in a consolidation range, (it) may break out at 9.00/share before the ghost month come ... (while) AP is on an accumulation ... pass (to 9000) break a new high."

The rumour has been apparently a root between Traders28 and The Oracle with each of them closely following their own

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

As of July 9, 2009

Company	Last	Change	Open	High	Low	Volume
MINING						
OIL						
PROPERTY						
SERVICES						
HOLDING FIRMS						
BANKS						
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO						
MANUFACTURING						

Currencies

July 9, 2009 Currency	Unit	Peso Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	1	1	47.7000
Japan	Yen	0.0101	98.9109	0.4821
United Kingdom	Pound	1.5218	0.6571	31.3262
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.1376	7.2674	6.5681
Switzerland	Franc	0.4554	2.1961	21.7277
Canada	Dollar	0.4231	2.3636	20.1828
Australia	Dollar	0.4231	2.3636	20.1828
Bahrain	Dinar	1.2654	0.7902	60.3414
Saudi Arabia	Riyal	0.2666	3.7502	12.7087
Kuwait	Dollar	0.1649	6.0631	7.8787
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.3149	3.1753	14.9479
Singapore	Dollar	0.3149	3.1753	14.9479
Thailand	Baht	0.0137	72.9927	1.0000
UAE	Dirham	0.2600	3.8462	12.3462
EU	Euro	0.0000	0.0000	67.1400
Korea	Won	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
China	Yuan	0.1398	7.1530	6.6700
Denmark	Kroner	0.1343	7.4461	6.3780
India	Rupee	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Norway	Krone	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
New Zealand	Dollar	0.3000	3.3333	14.3100
Sweden	Krona	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Taiwan	NT Dollar	0.0000	0.0000	1.4627

JOEL CHRISTOPHER'S

Discover how to use the Powerful Internet Marketing Tool used by CNN, Oprah, President Obama and more!

This July 17, listen and learn as internet marketing guru, Joel Christopher shares out his success secrets that enabled him to build a multi-million dollar internet marketing business.

+ Find out the 3 ways to grow your marketing business amidst the Global Economic Recession
+ Learn how to TRIPLE your sales in 24 hours or LESS using a simple 1 page strategy ... and if I ever I told you a dime to do it!

Joel Christopher is the US based Filipino internet marketing guru who was able to build a multi-million dollar internet marketing business just 10 years ago. Without any technical background (just like me), he doesn't know how to build his own website - but he'll share with you his outsourcing secrets! Joel was able to build an internet marketing business and a customer base of over 150,000. His approach to menu niches, viral marketing and list building is legendary. Even executives from Microsoft and various internet entrepreneurs consult him and pay. Join up to $5,000 a DAY! to be mentored and coached personally to build the "code". Now, you can learn his success secrets at a fraction of that cost. Book now to avoid disappointment since seats are limited!

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Meralco shares hit record high

GMA 7 woos OFWs with new service

GMA NETWORK INC. HAS ROLLED OUT A video-on-demand (VoD) service for overseas Filipino workers who want to watch the local broadcasting giant's homegrown television content on the Internet.

GMA executive vice president and chief operating officer Gilberto Duavit Jr. said in a recent interview that the network created by launched the VoD product to serve Filipinos in areas where its conventional channels are not carried by cable TV firms.

VoD is an interactive TV technology that allows subscribers to view programs in real time or download programs for later viewing.

A VoD system can be delivered over the Internet to home computers, portable computers, high-end cellular telephones and advanced digital media devices.

But Duavit said online TV would only be used to complement "linear" TV based on traditional programming.

"VoD is always going to be affected by piracy and free access platforms like You Tube. So on that basis, the bet is still more on the linear," he explained.

GMA president Felipe Yalong added that aside from reaching out to Filipinos where the cable networks do not carry its channels, he added that the VoD business could target transient Filipinos or those who do not stay too long in one place, that do not subscribe to an international channel.

Duavit said VoD was being developed for the overseas market. "Literally, our content is so freely and easily available," he said.

GMA also plans to expand its overseas pay television business, which is expected to account for at least 20 percent of its net profit this year.

The overseas business currently contributes about 7-8 percent of gross sales and about 15 percent of the company's net profit.

The company's television programs are distributed outside the Philippines through GMA Pinoy TV and GMA Life TV, 60% through GMA Worldwide (Philippines), Inc. It has 217,000 overseas subscribers for Pinoy TV and another 312,000 subscribers for Life TV.

Boris C. Donchez

Investors cheer PLDT's entry into utility

By Doris C. Dantes

SHARES OF MANILA ELECTRIC CO. (Meralco) soared to a record P376 each on upbeat earnings prospects ahead of the completion of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.'s purchase of a 26-percent stake in the country's largest electric utility.

PLDT is set to complete the deal to buy the stake in Meralco from the Lopez family on July 14 for about P25 billion.

Just a year ago, Meralco shares were trading at less than P50 a share. Prices started climbing following the entry of San Miguel Corp. and PLDT as strategic investors.

About 5.36 million shares of Meralco worth P370.19 million changed hands at the local bourse, accounting for 12.27 percent of the value turnover yesterday.

At the close of trade yesterday, Meralco had a market capitalization of 91.98-42 billion. Some 20 percent of its outstanding stock is held by the public.

Dealers said the run-up was fueled by the company's net-way profit guidance of P13 to P15 billion this year versus only P5.1 billion last year.

"Investor sentiment on Meralco has changed. Prospects are better. There's light at the end of the tunnel," said Asiro del Castillo, managing director in fund management firm First Grade Holdings.

"Basically, the entry of two giants helped energize the corporation given their influence and sense of corporate direction and also the different businesses that have opened that are complementary to Meralco," Del Castillo said.

San Miguel gained a foothold in Meralco by buying out a 27 percent stake from the then-owned Government Service Insurance System last year for P90 a share, payable in three years.

PLDT, through wireless unit Philippine Telephone Corp., agreed to buy the 26 percent block from the Lopezes at the same price of P90 a share but in upfront cash.

Earlier this year, its retirement fund PLDT Beneficial Trust also bought shares equivalent to 10.2 percent of Meralco from the open market, consequently pushing Meralco's share price above P100.

Meralco, meanwhile, has also listed plans to pilot-test the broadband over power-line technology, which if proven to be viable, can open up a large revenue stream by giving millions of households in Metro Manila cheaper broadband access by hooking up to their electric sockets.

Meralco treasurer Ruben Andaluz also told the Philippine Stock Exchange that because of the implementation of the generation-transmission (PBR) adjustment effective May of this year, it was anticipating higher core income this year.

"But given we are only six months into the current year, the final income figures would be driven by the effect of the prevailing economic conditions on sales volume," said Andaluz.

Philex ships ₱817M in metals

By Rita T. Olchondra

PUBLICLY LISTED PHILEX MINING CORP. shipped P817 million worth of metals last July 8, said Philex president and COO Jose Ernesto C. Villafuerte Jr.

Villafuerte told the Philippine Stock Exchange that based on provisional metal prices, Philex shipped P493 million in gold, P317 million in copper and P7 million worth of silver.

"The company delivered on July 8, 2008 its Shipment No. 661-for-Pacific containing about 543,731 grams or 19,067 ounces of gold from 3,278 dry metric tons of concentrates," Villafuerte said.

Philex earlier announced that its Padcal mine delivered almost 751,000 dry metric tons (DMT) in June, valued at 1995 million.

Based on provisional metal prices, the split was P534 million for gold, P353 million for copper and P8 million from silver.

Philex is spending P1.087 billion in 2009, up from last year's P1.089 billion, to operate its Padcal mine in Benguet and Cagayan Marie, where its Boyongan and Surigao properties are located.

Philex posted a consolidated net income of P2.8 billion or P9.80 per share in 2008, the third highest in the company's 51-year history.

It recorded its highest income of P5.44 billion or P5.49 a share in 2007, mainly due to soaring prices of metals in the world market.

GPC increases . . .

From page B1

to 1.05 percent stake in Galoc oil field for $600,000 per percentage interest point.

Bicentenary said the decision to proceed with the sale was made because "management believes that the minimal participating interest in the Galoc oil field will not contribute significantly to revenues, considering the risks involved."

Prior to the sale of minority interests, GPC held a 58.20-percent interest in SC 14C, while Nido Petroleum Philippines Pty Ltd. had a 22.28 percent stake.

Other stakeholders are Philodrill Corp. (7.43 percent); Oriental Petroleum and Minerals Corp./Cimpacon Oil Gas and Power Corp. (7.75 percent); Pearl Energy Philippines Corp. (2.27 percent); and Alcorn Gold Resources Corp. (1.33 percent).

Meanwhile, Otto also disclosed that Malampaya, contractor of the floating production storage and offloading (FPSO) facility in the Galoc oil field, has mothballed equipment to evaluate production.

GPC had decided to disconnect FPSO from the mooring and their system two weeks ago due to adverse weather.

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Growth Fund - Peso	1.49153	1.49279
Equity Fund - Peso	0.84403	0.87014
Bond Fund - US Dollar	1.4000	1.4000
Balanced Retail Fund 1	1.08870	1.08748
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EYE ON ASIA SURVEY

Filipinos see more money on horizon

By Kate V. Pedroso
Inquirer Research

THOUGH FILIPINOS MAY NOT be the most satisfied about their lives right now, and are somewhat less content about their life today as compared to a year ago, findings of the latest Eye on Asia survey show that Filipinos still think that the Philippines is a place where people are more optimistic about their future.

"In the face of all this troubling, Filipinos have actually been quite stable," Steve Yi, chief strategy officer of Grey Korea, said in a recent phone interview with the Inquirer.

Grey Group Asia Pacific, a global marketing communications company, recently released its 2009 Eye on Asia study, which looked at respondents' attitudes toward life today and in the future, work, and finances amid a global recession.

The study, which was conducted between December 2008 and January 2009, covered a total of 8,000 respondents, or 500 respondents from each of the 16 countries included in the survey—Australia, Bangladesh, China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam and the Philippines.

The study covered respondents aged 18 to 65 from all socioeconomic classes.

Eye on Asia also looked at attitudes toward brands and marketing, and proposed a "unique segmentation" of consumers based on how they "think, feel and orient themselves" rather than the traditional geopolitical boundaries, which the study called "Asian Brand Tribes."

Optimism in Asia

Yi said that while Asians in general may not be too happy at the moment, they're not that unhappy.

"They may not be very happy currently, for a variety of reasons, but they are not that unhappy compared, say, to the West," Yi said, adding that Asians also have high hopes for the future.

"Asians are very optimistic about the future. For example, we asked the question, 'compared with 12 months ago, would you say that you are more content, less content, or about the same?' We found that a lot of people scored very low, because obviously, compared to 12 months ago, the situation's very bad," Yi said, pointing out that the survey was conducted during a global economic downturn.

Household finances

"But we also asked them the question, 'Soon do you see your current household finances changing in the next year?' And we found that a lot of people also rate their finances actually improving," Yi added.

"In the Philippines, 48 percent answered that they see their finances improving in the next 12 months—that's quite a large percent, given the current situation on the market right now."

On the question, "how satisfied are you with your life today," the Philippines scored 2.98, slightly below the Asian average of 2.73. On the question, comparing consciousness with life today against 12 months ago, the country scored -0.04. The regional average was -0.09.

As for how they are distributed financial changing, nearly half of Filipino respondents (48 percent) see it getting better in the year to come. The country scored 0.24, as against the regional average of 0.15.

Most Filipinos (27 percent) strongly agree, 30 percent somewhat agree) also think that the future is likely to be better than the past—scoring 3.42 against the Asian average of 3.03.

The Philippines also scored the highest on the plane where people are "most optimistic about their own future" (80 percent strongly agree, 39 percent somewhat agree)—exploring a score of 3.79, the highest among the 16 countries, and well above the 3.47 Asian average.

"Countries that are not yet heavily urbanized, like the Philippines, tend to be much more easy going, a little bit less affected by the recession and tend to be more optimistic," Yi said, adding that highly developed countries, like Japan and Korea, tend to be "quite depressed."

The Philippines also ranked among the top five countries, in terms of concern for household finances (72 percent very concerned). The Philippines scored 3.67, above the Asian average of 3.31, and fourth only to Vietnam (3.85), Sri Lanka (3.74) and Korea (3.39).

"A lot of Asians are saving for the future. It's kind of interesting. We found out that more developing countries are saving more. The countries that are unemployed or saving a lot of money are not saving very much at all," Yi shared. "But for the Filipinos, almost 60 percent believe that they're actively saving for their family's future. That's actually just above average," he added.

He cited figures for Korea (80 percent) and Japan (69 percent) as being "well below the Asian average."

Brand tribes

The study also revealed five distinct "segments" of Asian consumers—the "new" brand engagers, the perceived value seekers, individualistic believers, status seekers and function fixers.

Yi said he feel that there is a correlation among Asian consumers that transcends borders, "Geographical."

"Filipinos for example are defined as 'perceived value seekers (41 percent)." That means they get value for money They want the best quality but they can get for the least price. It may not be the top-of-the-line item, but it will be a very good item," he said. "Filipinos have the largest number of perceived value seekers among Asians."

Another 26 percent of Filipinos are called "New Brand Engagers."

"This segment likes to try new brands," said Yi. "It's all about the brand experience. They just have to have a different experience ... and they're open to try new things."

The third largest group in the country is the "Function Fixer" group.

"These people are all about practical products. Essentially if it's a product that looks horrible, if it does what it's supposed to do very well, that's the type of product these people would go for," explained Yi. About 20 percent of Filipino respondents fall under this category.

The last two groups each had below 10 percent. "Only 9 percent of Filipinos are classified as 'status seekers,' which means that Filipinos are not all about promoting luxury brands. They're more about practicality and value," said Yi.

Only 5 percent are classified as "individualist believers"—those defined as being concerned about what other people think but choose to buy their own brands, or those who enjoy a mosaic of brands, while relatively less interest in established brands.

"It seems that Filipinos are much more consensual or empathetic in terms of their decision-making as they're not all about doing whatever they want individually or trying to be different from their group," Yi noted.

"The segmentation is important because these groups exist in every Asian country. It's a different way of looking at consumers across borders," he added.

How do the Philippine "brand tribes" stack up to counterparts in other countries? "It's pretty varied," Yi said. "Essentially, countries like the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, and Malaysia have large proportions of perceived value seekers. New brand engagers are in countries like Vietnam, China. Individualistic believers, not surprisingly, are in countries that are very highly developed like Japan, Korea, and Singapore.

"Actually each country has a good portion of each segment. Some of the countries almost had even numbers in the segmentation, like 20 percent per segment or very close to it. The important thing is that the segments exist," he added.

Retail habits

The survey also showed that most Asians still chose to shop through retail stores.

"We thought that in this day and age, there's a lot of institutions on how people shop. We still found that a majority of Filipinos still shop through brick-and-mortar retail stores like department stores. Over 50 percent of Asians still shop in department stores," Yi said.

"For the Philippines, 68 percent of Filipinos said they shop at the department store. It's really quite a rare. The next in line—46 percent of Filipinos responded that they shopped online over the past year. That's a pretty large percentage, shopping online, at this stage," Yi added.

Email percentages also skimmed through other channels like television sales clubs (17 percent) and home TV shopping (13 percent).

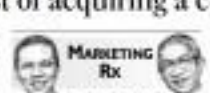
"But basically, they're still going to the store, buying the products, seeing it, taking it out, trying it on, and then bringing it back to the house," said Yi.

Internet use is fourth year, far on Asia, which has been recognized as an annual predictor of trends, has interviewed over 30,000 people from 16 countries.

For the 2009 study, the Grey Group conducted a qualitative survey to benchmark attitudes, values and behaviors, using a consumers questionnaire supplemented by some 9000 research company, The Barrier Group; and an ethnographic guide, which focused on how people feel about different retail channels across the Asia Pacific region.

The Grey Group, which ranks among the largest global marketing communications companies, is represented in 96 countries, with 432 offices operating in 194 cities worldwide. In the Asia-Pacific region, Grey Group owns 20 sites in 17 countries, and has a combined staff strength of over 3,000. Its parent company is WPP.

The cost of acquiring a customer



WE CONTINUE OUR SERIES FOR SMALL business owners.

Last week, we started answering the questions of Mia PR, a spa owner with two branches.

She asked she was finding it more difficult to make money these days. So she basically wanted to know the following:

1. What marketing "weapons" are best for her small business. She is now using print ads, radio ads and flyers.

2. If she should start investing and using software to keep track of her customers (she thought she is a non-techie) and start a database.

3. How to get started doing e-mail marketing the right way (to avoid health newsletters to her customers and prospects).

In answering Mia PR's first question, we started by doing a basic accounting of how much it cost for her to acquire new customers through print ads (the same could be done for flyers and radio ads.)

Way, very few small business owners measure their marketing efforts and thus fail to know the cost of acquiring their customers.

Many just place an ad or blow a couple of thousand pesos on flyers and stick and hope that a "lot" of people respond.

For beginning, this is not a strategy.

Although it is a good attitude, you've got to back it up with measurement and numbers to determine if your current ad and promo strategy is working or not.

If you don't measure your stuff to tally how many people responded to an ad you placed or brought in a flyer to avail of a special offer, you'll have no guarding on what to do and what is not.

It is a discipline and you need to develop a culture of measurement (versus gamut-mates) in your office. If you don't, next time you ask your staff, "how many people called today about the promo/ad we launched?," you'll get a subjective measurement like "marami po" (a lot) or "kaunti lang" (just a few). With that kind of generic stats, you'll never be able to know how many new customers were brought in by your advertising.

So last week, we went through the step by step "brain-tax" to measure and monitor results. (I refer to acquire a customer) and came up with the following:

Say event ad 1 place in this publication, 1 get about 45 inquiries, about 20 percent of them are converted into customers — about 9-10 new customers, and those 10 customers spend a total of P11,000 (P200 every spa or P1,100 (A22) per visit. $11=$9.

"The ad cost me P7,000 or P700 per customer. Meanwhile, the cost of the spa service is about 40 percent or P440 per customer."

In the question we posed to our last week's column was: Should Mia PR continue to use this print advertising "weapon" to acquire new customers?

Simple addition tells us that Mia PR spends P1,100 to "buy" a customer through the print ad—at P90 more than the cost.

Should she continue advertising?

Yes, if ...

1. She has a system to retain her customers and get their loyalty. (Which will bring us later on to the concept of CRM and keeping a customer database.) If the customers that she bought through print advertising keep on coming back, then the cost of advertising will soon become an investment, i.e. the next time a customer that was generated by the print ad comes back for another high-end P1,100 spa treatment, Mia PR's spa now makes P660 on that customer since the cost of customer acquisition is already "down payment."

2. She can approach the sales manager of the publication and negotiate for a lower rate, or inquire about doing an exhost/barter (whole or part.) This will cut the cost of her advertising.

3. The response and conversion may maintain or improve. Test different ad copy and offers in the ad (read Guerrilla Marketing by Jay Levinson or Instant Cashflow by Brad Sugars for promotions and offers that get response).

How do the same for the freelancer, flyers, direct mail and radio ads that you spend on.

Measuring and counting the acquisition cost of a customer spells the difference between looking at marketing as a cost and looking at it as an investment.

Next week, we'll look at a marketing weapon that like PR can use to buy customers at a bargain.

It's a digital weapon that is growing number of entrepreneurs and even big corporations are using or planning — e-mail marketing.

Keep on sending your comments or questions to marketingrx@pldtdsl.net or text us at (0918-3386613).

Customer retention gets second look

By Abigail L. Ho

DURING EARLY TIMES—SUCH as now, business owners should allot the bulk of their limited marketing budgets to retaining existing customers instead of trying to get new ones.

In a recent presentation at the Philippine International Franchise Conference and Expo 2009, Teresa Jacklin managing director of Jacklin Management, Services Angeli Lansdowell said it was five times more expensive to get a new customer than to keep an existing one.

"Focus on your customers. They are your treasure. They are your lifeblood in your business," she said.

She revealed that based on research, as much as 75 percent of a firm's revenues could be derived from high-value customers, which usually comprised less than a third of overall customer numbers.

Considering this, she said that if businesses would have to cut-back on their marketing budgets during economic downturns, they should not do so at the expense of their existing high-value clients.

Another way to stay afloat and even profit during times of crisis is to ensure that customers are satisfied enough to stay with a particular brand and even recommend it to family and friends.

Citing research conducted by McGraw Hill, Lansdowell said 67 percent of customer losses were attributed to indifference or poor attitude on the part of the product or service providers.

A recession period such as this made maintaining customer satisfaction critical, she said.

"Loyalty is a result of repeated satisfaction. Invest in areas that deliver very good customer experience. Give your advocates to spread the word about your brand," she said.

RP banking sector seen to remain healthy

Lending to continue posting decent growth, says ADB

By Michelle V. Rosario

THE ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK expects the banking sector to remain healthy this year and, as such, help the Philippines avoid a credit crunch due to being suffered by other countries.

"Liquidity in the country's banking system is plenty, as proven by a solid growth in M3... There may be some decline in profitability, but not to a degree that will be worrisome," Neeraj Jain, ADB country director for the Philippines, said in a briefing yesterday.

Contrary to many suspicions that the local banking system would be in trouble this year due to the failure of some borrowers to pay back loans, Jain said banks in the country would remain major contributors to economic growth this year.

He said bank lending was not expected to contract and was likely to continue posting decent growth.

Jain cited a recent report by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas that the outstanding loan portfolio of the banking sector had continued to post double-digit growth as of May.

The BSP said that in January to May, the outstanding loans of banks amounted to P2.13 trillion, up 18.2 percent year-on-year. If inter-bank loans were excluded, loans to consumers and corporate clients in January to May would have risen by 16.6 percent from the same period last year.

"A 17 percent growth in lending is still very strong," Jain said.

This year's lending growth, as indicated by data for the first five months, "should likely show down from the growth we saw in the previous years. But Jain said a deceleration was expected given efforts of banks to improve their risk management programs.

To be expected that banks will strengthen their risk management, but it does not mean they are not taking risks. They are still lending," Jain said.

Unlike other institutions that expect the Philippines to fall into recession this year, the ADB expects the country to maintain positive growth. The ADB's projection is anchored partly on rising bank lending and remittances sent by overseas Filipino workers.

Jain, however, said the ADB would likely downgrade its growth forecast for the Philippines and other Asian countries for the year to take into account recent developments. In its outlook last year, the ADB said the Philippines would likely grow by 2.5 percent this year.

Jain said this growth forecast might already be outdated given that the Philippines, like other countries in the region, grew much slower than expected in the first quarter. The economy grew by only 0.4 percent in the first quarter, the slowest in 10 years.

But Jain said the Philippines is expected to still register positive growth this year.

In 2008, the country's banking system registered a collective net income of P41.4 billion. The ADB said the amount could decline this year, but stressed that banks would still be profitable.

The ADB official, however, said a healthy banking sector would not be enough to accelerate the country's growth to levels that will help reduce poverty.

He said the government should implement measures that would improve tax collections so that there would be enough resources for infrastructure and social services.

The Philippines, Jain said, needed to grow by 7 to 8 percent yearly for 10 to 12 years to see a substantial reduction in poverty incidence which, latest estimates showed, was about a third of the country's 90-million population.

From page B2

Market Rider

diverse of stock picks, market timing and money-management algorithm. Its fund is outperforming over the other funds' players' during halfway at Week 12.

Underlying holding or to so many stock positions so those fully invested. But she is outperforming everyone other because aside from having picked the better performing stock or more stable stocks, she is maximizing the potential of each position against the current market weakness. Also, she is mostly into the better performing market sub-sectors, namely power utilities and banks. Her stocks are Manila Electric Co. (MERC), First Gen Corp. (FGEN), Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI) and Banco de Oro Unibank Inc.

In contrast, while The Oracle also had his sights on the power sector through Aboitiz Power Corp. (APC), he is clearly relying on the performance of the controversial industrial conglomerate through Pepsi-Cola Products Philippines Inc (PPI), however, both stocks are quite neutral in market performance. He is saved by PX, which is currently hot. Putting in more money in Phelps Dodge Corp. (PX) would have made him more cash. Thankfully, its big cash position, similar to Tambolaya, remains to be his main saving grace.

Now the could make the exception. Despite being fully invested, his investment position grew. This means that he has some of the right stocks that can beat the market. However, money management also means he could put him in the lead.

(You may reach the Market Rider at marketrider@inquirer.com.ph or directly at dennismarquez@yahoo.com.)

Hidden scam accomplices

Raul J. Bulaklaksa

THE SHARKS BEHIND THE BIGGEST Ponzi scam in the world, Bernard Madoff, has been sentenced by a US court to 150 years in prison.

He pleaded guilty to securities, mail and wire fraud, money laundering, investment-adviser fraud, perjury, theft and making false statements.

As there were no circumstances that can mitigate the gravity of his offenses, the judge imposed on him the maximum sentences allowable under US law.

The erstwhile high flying money manager will serve the prison term consecutively fearing a presidential pardon. Madoff, 71, will spend the rest of his life behind bars.

His sentencing, however, does not put an end to the tragic saga. The authorities do not believe he acted alone in his three decades-long global swindle.

His sons, daughters and two sons, whose he earlier absolved from culpability for his crimes, are not yet off the hook. They, together with some of his business associates, are still under investigation.

The search is on for proof that will justify filing charges against those people or the seizure of their properties suspected to have been acquired from Madoff's illegitimate wealth.

Operations

The skepticism is well-grounded. Financial scams, regardless of where they operate, are never one-person affairs.

Shadowing marauding schemes starts initially on the ideas of a single person or a group of similarly well-minded people, in needs rules and marketing personnel to promote its "products." Their efforts, in turn, have to be coordinated by lawyers, accountants and other professionals whose principal duty is to keep the cash registers merrily ringing without inviting attention or scrutiny from the authorities.

It is essential that the business entity used as vehicle to arouse potential victims and to channel the proceeds of the loot to the operators appear legitimate.

Every effort must be taken to project to the public the image of a law-abiding and responsible corporate citizen.

In the hands of a skilled lawyer, half-truths and misrepresentations can be made to appear as accurate or in conformity with the requirements for the issuance of permits or licenses to operate the business of the corporation.

If there are ambiguities or loopholes in the law that can be used to prevent scam artists from prosecution, there is an army of lawyers who will enthusiastically prepare that legal cover for the right price.

Creativity

No lawyer would openly admit it, but there is quite rejoicing in law offices whenever someone in the line of work successfully exploited for the benefit of clients.

After all, the reasoning goes, that's what lawyers are paid for. Sounds unnecessary, but that's how the world resembles to the legal profession.

The most recent example of such mindset is the reported president of rural banks identified with the Legacy Group network drawn their deposits in P250,000 multiples to take advantage of the government's insurance cover.

Another indispensable element in the operation of scams is "creative accounting" or, loosely defined, the art of manipulating accounting rules and principles to meet the objectives of its intended beneficiary. With deft manipulation of entries in the financial statements, rubber cost, for instance, be attributed to assets that do not exist or, if they do, the prices are exaggerated. In the animated eye, the resulting figures give the impression that the company is in good financial health. The truth comes out only when the scam is exposed and the investors are left holding the proverbial empty bag.

Liability

It's every man for himself if the scam unravels and the authorities run after its operators.

Before the operators do a Madoff, that is, cave up in the cruise, expect them to do their very ingenuity and invoke all kinds of defenses to avoid prosecution. If push comes to shove, the scam artist can claim he did the acts complained of after consultations with or upon the advice of his legal and financial advisers.

This I-acted-in-good-faith defense is an elegant in corporate cases. The auditors or business executive can be blamed for his violation of the law or the people who allegedly advised him on the matter. If there are documents that could prove this allegation, the advisers could find themselves in serious trouble. But absence of finding "smoking guns" of that nature are rare. Lawyers and accountants are very careful about putting in writing advice or clients that may fall in the wrong hands or attacks of professional misconduct.

The rule of the thumb for giving sensitive or confidential (read: legally questionable) advice is: do it verbally, nothing to writing. This way, in the unlikely event of a parting of ways, it will be the word of the client against that of the adviser if he any reason that rule is forgotten, the recipient may be raised that the advice given was merely recommendation or an expression of opinion which the client was free to accept or reject. And if he does, he should be held accountable for his actions.

Anybody who believes scam operators and abuse or subdues the breadth of professional advice should undergo a brain scan.

(For feedback, please write to spotlight@inquirer.com.ph)

DTI expects better investment picture in H2

By Abigail L. Ho

WHILE FIRST HALF INVESTMENT commitments have fallen short of expectations, the Department of Trade and Industry expects the second semester to be relatively better.

Trade Secretary Peter Favila acknowledged there was "gap" between what the DTI expected in terms of investment commitments and the pledges that actually came to him money in hand.

"There's a gap, admittedly. But given the conditions of the global economy, I'm happy with it," he told reporters.

He said the DTI was not changing the investment targets it had set at the start of the year, as he was confident that more pledges would come in within the second half.

Favila had been accompanying President Macapagal-Arroyo on her overseas trips so he could meet with potential investors and possibly gain investment commitments for the country.

He declined to say how much he was, personally, pledges he had secured on the from the recent presidential trips, however, saying he would rather compile all those and just work at ensuring that these would come to fruition.

In January, he said industries were expected to reach P458 billion this year. P200 billion from the Board of Investments and P170 billion from the Philippine Economic Zone Authority.

The expected P388 billion BOI-registered investments for the year, he said, was roughly just the same as last year's P388.4 billion. Projected PEZA investments, meanwhile, represented a growth of about 10 percent from the P154.8 billion registered last year.

He said the second semester should hold better prospects for the country.

One area of opportunity, he related, was the garments sector.

A recently filed bill with the United States Congress in support of the country's inclusion in Program 807, which gave various benefits to US trading partners that produced garments out of US-made fabrics, could revitalize the local garments and textile industry, he said.

DA wants 7% tariff imposed on feed wheat

By Rica T. Chichioco

THE AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT HAS supported government moves to lend protection to corn farmers by bringing back the 7 percent duty on imports of feed wheat, which can be used to replace of corn in animal feeds.

"The main rice harvest is coming in the next few months. They (corn farmers) deserve some level of protection," Yap said in an interview.

The country's corn production may drop to 3 million metric tons (MT) at the end of the second quarter of 2009 due to shrinking hectarage devoted to corn, according to the industry group Philippine Maize Federation (Philmaize).

"Harvest area may contract by 6-67 percent to 1.131 million hectares from 1.137 million hectares in the same period last year.

Yield may decline by 1.98 percent, from 2.86 MT per hectares to 2.84 MT per hectare," the Bureau of Agricultural Research said in a report.

The agency said significant reductions in production were expected in Western Visayas, Northern Mindanao, Ilocos region and Caraga.

The department maintained, however, that it was still hoping for improved production in the second half of the year as farmers were expected to be encouraged by protection from cheap imported feed wheat and the higher buying price implemented by the National Food Authority (NFA). The NFA raised the buying price of yellow corn to P13 from P11.50 in May.

From page B1

ADB sets aside $4.3B in aid for RP

ipines, the recent improvement in business confidence and increase in election exports were positive signals.

However, he said, the country faces downside risks arising from a longer-than-expected downturn in industrialized countries and the further weakening of government revenues.

Jain said the government's medium-term fiscal stabilization efforts should be anchored on raising the tax effort rather than reducing public spending.

"For the economy to move to a sustained high-growth path, greater spending is needed on infrastructure, like roads and ports, and on social services like education," he said.

By a sustained high growth path, the official means growth rates of 7 to 8 percent to be posted continually over a period of 10 to 12 years.

Such economic performance is required to make a real dent on poverty, Jain explained.

BSP reduces key rates . . .

From page B1

Economic managers said, however, that the Philippines would still be better off than other economies in the region now in the grip of recession. Officials also stressed that the Philippine economy was still recovering this year, contradicting projections by some economists that the country would sink into recession.

BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo said measures implemented by the central bank and the government should be enough to prevent a contraction.

Apart from the 2-percentage-point cut in the BSP's policy rates, which also included its budget for refinancing from P48 billion last year to P60 billion this year. The BSP last last year also reduced the reserve requirements for banks—the portion of deposits that must be kept as reserves with the BSP—from 21 to 19 percent of deposit liabilities.

Guinigundo said the BSP was able to ease its monetary policy due to inflation, the outlook of which remained benign.

Decline in interest rates has the adverse effect of increasing demand and accelerating inflation. But the BSP said accelerating inflation was fine, as long as it remained within the official target. According to the latest BSP estimates, inflation will average at 3.3 percent for 2009, and between 5.3 and 5.7 percent for 2010.

Shares . . .

From page B1

A total of 827.13 million shares worth P2.3 billion ($48.66 million) changed hands.

Advancers led decliners 60 to 56, while 33 issues closed unchanged.

Jose Vito Martin of AB Capital Securities told Dow Jones Newswires however that the market was not really gaining strength, noting that the day's gain was mostly pushed by second- and third-line stocks that showed good priorities.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. shed 0.4 percent to 92.3.2. A shares of Ayala Corp. added 1.6 percent to close at P39.50, while its B shares rose 3.4 percent to P68.

AFP

Portfolio Summary and Performance Standings For Week Five ending July 8, 2009

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LIFESTYLE Fashion & Beauty

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Manton de Manila gets a cool makeover

Margarita Fores, Amina Aranaz-Alunan, Araceli Dans, Wyg Tysman–they reinvent a prized artifact from the galleon trade

By Alice T. Vergara

ONCE A COVETED status symbol among stylish Spanish women at the height of the Manila-Acapulco galleon trade, the mantón de Manila is getting a 21st-century makeover from 19 artists within and outside the fashion industry.

As the subject of an ongoing exhibit, "Draped in Silk: The Journey of the Mantón de Manila," which runs until Jan. 29, the Ayala Museum on Ayala Avenue focuses on the statement-making, embroidered silk shawl with long fringes.

Featured artists include Steve de Leon, Jhun Cruz Reyes, Kanlaon Gallimore, Dondi Tirazona, Jaime Ascaso, Margarita Fores, Bibi Lichauco, Araceli Dans, Michelline Syjuco, Hector Salazar, George Tapan and Wyg Tysman.

Manton de Manila gets a cool makeover

From page B1

Their respective takes on the mantón reflect the traditions they're most comfortable in. Tiam, we see the likes of Frances and Delores doing shawls and various articles of clothing reminiscent of the mantón, but with a difference.

Vibrant images

Frances, one of the industry's best illustrators, used a combination of inks and acrylic ink from La Chine as his medium for acrylic illustrations featuring vibrant images of roses and peonies.

For his second piece, he used a more muted color palette as he drew inspiration from a rose-containing.

He knits himself silks with embroidered and appliqued with intricate pieces inspired by the Spanish fan, another iconic piece of the period. He also did a tapestry of a collage of bananas, taro and palm with fingers, birds and flowers, which mirrored his trademark origami technique.

"I applied these various techniques and inspirations to produce a wedding gown," says de Leon. "The mantón de Manila and abanico (Spanish fan) were also popular accessories in the Philippines in the 18th and 19th centuries. To give my mantón a twist, I used pina silk in white and beige instead of the usual black."

Others, like Perez, a connoisseur, drew to good of their creative juices, instead of food, for example. Perez chose to express herself through her floral arrangement inspired by bright blooms typically embroidered on a mantón.

Rose chocked the canal Dingers blooms in have of bright red flowers that grace shoulders in the countryside. Apart from red achieve fruits and wild berries, her floral arrangement includes exotic flowers and green palm components that mimic the mantón's fringes.

She juxtaposed them with rusty scrap metal steel found objects like chips of iron bark to lend some tension to the arrangement. Unlike most of the pieces, Perez' work needs to be maintained once a week for it to remain fresh.

"Working with flowers is instantaneous," she says. "It can't be repeated and doesn't have a recipe. On a deeper level, the floral arrangement is my interpretation of what makes a Filipino unique."

"We're progressive like Latinos, but we're a bit restrained like Malays," she adds. "We're ingenious and resourceful, which I guess comes from being part Chinese, but we're also as modern and edgy because of what the Americans taught us."

Private collections

Their various promotions, which also include themed photographs, shawl set pieces, fashion accessories and home-vignettes, are interspersed with vintage mantons on loan from private collections such as those of curator Jeannie Javier and the Yuchengco Foundation.

"Mantón really originated from China," said writer and Yuchengco Museum curator Jeannie Javier. "Since they arrived in Spain via the Philippines, they eventually became known as mantón de Manila."

There are other items that had to find items were couples during the galleon trade, which saw the unprecedented exchange of products as well as ideas between the Philippines and the rest of the world.

Products from the Orient intended for Spain and the rest of Europe went through the Philippines before they were shipped to Mexico and eventually to Spain. Products from Spain intended for the Philippines and other Asian countries went through the same route, but in an opposite direction.

Apart from reinventing the mantón, the exhibit aims to project its origin and the vital role the Philippines played as repository of Oriental art and commerce in the Spanish era.

A section of the museum is devoted to galleon trade, with maps and routes taken by these merchant vessels as they entered the high seas loaded with goods from either Asia or Europe.

Javelona said her collaboration try to present a parallelism between Chinese—as seen in the mantones—and Philippine modernities. This is to show that the country, although perhaps not as sophisticated as China back then, also had a rich tradition of embroidery.

An entire story line of native embroidery on piña and jusi is displayed in glass cases at the museum's mezzanine, most of it from private collections.

JEANNIE Javelona, Yuchengco Museum curator

VISUAL artist Maxine Syjuco with "Manton de Manila," a self-portrait done in acrylic and layered with rose petals and resin (right) Michelline Syjuco and her creation, a sculpture made of metal and "calibrated" rust, and accented with tiny chains

Going green in hair care

By Ruby de Vera
Contributor

I HAVE DRY HAIR, ESPECIALLY AT THE tips. After having my hair rebored twice last year, I could say with certainty that it died. I used to think only monsoon rivals could restore it, but only if I would find the other half of the rubber as I could decode the symbols for instructions.

I don't enjoy looking at the mirror, there are days when I look like a lion, my hair sticking out in tufts at the back. Sometimes they would "wake up" ahead of me. Every day is a bad hair day.

I had tried everything to save my hair, from using coconut oil to doing the more expensive (once-a-month hair treatments, but my hair still looked as if an animal ate on my head to die.

Silkworm of Professional, which has been in the hair care industry for more than a century now—it produced the first liquid shampoo, cold wave perm, créme shampoo in a tube, alkali-free shampoo and hairspray—seems to me like the light at the end of the tunnel.

Its newest line, Essensity, is a full-range hair care line that uses the most carefully selected, plant-derived actives that are free from artificial fragrances, silicone, paraffin and mineral oils, and parabens. This follows its "less-more" philosophy... no damage-causing chemicals.

The high-quality natural ingredients used in the Essensity range are sourced from organic farms that practice sustainable methods. Product formulations are mostly biodegradable, and use 100-percent recyclable packaging materials. Essensity also supports the reforestation of tropical rainforests in Canada and maintains the planet' natural habitats and provides employment in relevant areas.)

Robert Seah, regional technical manager of Schwarzkopf Professional, explained the main of our hair and recommended treatment and shades to our assigned stylists.

ESSENSITY salon ambassadors Nikki Bacay of Nikki Bacay Salon, Weng de Guzman of Pin Salon and Ivy Arroyo of David's Salon

PRESIDENT and general manager of Bagsyte Marketing Corporation Carmela Bacaoco

SCHWARZKOPF professional regional technical manager Robert Seah

The Philippines is the first country in Asia to launch the Essensity line. Aside from using mostly natural ingredients, he said Essensity is about performance.

He introduced Essensity Colour in Dark Teak to even out my light streaks, and the intense Curing Mask, a rinse-off treatment that should strengthen and repair my brittle hair. Because the products are mainly organic, there are no stinging or itchiness when they applied the hair color, unlike my experience with ordinary brands. It's also ammonia and fragrance-free, so there's no unpleasant smell.

Top hairstylists and Essensity Salon Ambassadors Nikki Bacay of Nikki Bacay Salon, Weng de Guzman of Pin Salon and Ivy Arroyo of David's Salon were on hand to give their expertise. See can my hair is devoid of split ends and for more definition. They gave my hair lifesaver.

The line carries the wide range of hair care, care (hair maintenance and health), color (natural hair enhancer), and styling. Essensity products are available in selected salons nationwide. (For more information, log on to http://www.schwarzkopf.com.)

Bold and graphic for uptown chic, downtown edge

KATE Spade Rockliffe large tote bag in red

THIS SEASON'S KATE SPADE COLLECTION encourages you to "take a chance." Whether by wearing a bright color or bold graphic prints, we urge you to break away from the ordinary.

Why not throw on sparkles and sequins everyday? This season's pieces are made for everyday wear, with the bolded shoe is doesn't take a special occasion to put on a party dress.

The Kate Spade woman walks the fine balance between uptown graciousness and downtown edge, with a chic and playful recovery.

Ben Sisane collection is the ultimate in polished lady-like perfection, made from sleek patent leather adorned with a delicate bow. This group features shapes like the Mini Giggle—just big enough for your lipstick, cell phone and credit card, and the Mini Simone—a great everyday satchel.

The New Yours collection combines red and pink in woven vinyl for a great pop of color in one of our most functional and feminine shapes...the Austin Coal Tote, big enough to hold all of the essentials.

The Coney Island group, a nod to the legendary neighborhood that hosts one of the city's oldest amusement parks, features soft quilted nylon bags in playfully bright, candy colors in our signature shapes—the Lilla and the Stevie.

In the Philippines, Kate Spade is exclusively distributed by Stores Specialists Inc., and is located at the Power Plant Mall, Greenbelt 1, Rustan's Makati, and Shangri-La Plaza Mall.

KATE Spade dove dresser medium bobby cosmetic case in lipstick print

KATE Spade Roland Park Cecilia in cement

Inspired by die-hard divers' watches, the LACOSTE SEASPORT takes the codes and colour details of its more technical brothers to create a trendsetting timepiece. Sporty ladies will appreciate the white dial highlighted with pink and turquoise.

Pink and Turquoise are the colors that makes us feel both joyful and refreshed. BIARRITZ is another collection via are these colors.

You can select the watches according to the mood of the moment.

WEEWILLDOODLE and Honda and Talent representatives

'Purple' hunt

ZOBEL MALLS (SM) ESTE ESTE finally a chance to explore a wide array of retail and food establishments, entertainment and activities and exciting activities that are truly memorable.

The fans of the new Ayala Malls partners with Yahoo! which has spearheaded a social movement called Project Purple to find Filipinos' passion by finding, sharing and connecting to the things that matter most to them through the Yahoo! Purple Hunt movement.

Yahoo! has given the treasure hunt its very own purple twist, harnessing insights about the web and the Philippines have been uncovered through the Yahoo! Purple Hunt (ph.hunt.yahoo.com.ph).

Participants have been asked to solve online clues and find items located around Metro Manila.

The fun began from 2 to register using Purple Hunters will have the opportunity to enjoy the Purple Hunt until July 25.

Ayala Malls is the official venue of the Yahoo! Purple Hunt movement. During the "Purplin' Yourself" event, prizes were given away to lucky Purple hunters such as Purplin Bitter Emma doughnuts and cakes, Yahoo! prizes such as Canon digital cameras, Blackberry mobile phones specially designed by Pinoy artists, and the grand prize given to one lucky Purple hunter — a new all-new Honda Jazz car sporting purple artwork created and masterfully designed by WeeWillDoodle.

WEEWILLDOODLE draws on a Honda Jazz.

HONDA Jazz

Functional decor in home fair

ROBINSONS DEPARTMENT Store is holding a July Home Fair, where functional decor for the living room, bedroom, dining room, bathroom, kitchen and office/garden/area are on sale until July 31 in all Robinsons stores branches nationwide. There are floor-length clothy curtains in striped designs, large wood frames that thematic, throw pillows in soft orange, purple or blue, outlit lamps and cozy floor pillows for comprehensive. There are also desk lamps, earthenware and candle sets, bedroom linens, comforters in relaxing shades of brown, green and blue, white ceramic china serving dishes that go with dinnerware sets in minimalist prints, organic rattan placemats and wooden trays.

For de-cluttering the kitchen there are plastic stick cabinets, kitchen racks and stackable covered trays. There are also kitchen assistance units — juicer, blender, coffee maker and microwave oven. There are stackable clear storage boxes that make for tidying and retrieving toys, tools, clothes, linens, books and old gadgets on easy. There are also zipper/drawstring bags and boxes in assortment (medium), accessory boxes or shoe racks, to the Parchasa Retail Purchase Promo. For every P500 worth of purchase from the department, Department, a shopper can buy any of the two featured home items at discounted prices. Visit www.robinsonsdepartmentstore.com.ph.

Barista course

The Baza Kitchen offers Barista Course July 11 and 14, 1:30-6 p.m. This hands-on seminar course is for those seeking entry level positions as baristas in the coffee service industry. Visit www.thebazakitchen.com, e-mail cookschool@thebazakitchen.com, text 0917-8621007 local 109.

The Baza Kitchen Culinary Center every Tuesday to Saturday at 858 Liberty Building, A. Arnaiz Avenue (Pasay Road), Makati. Call 8923077 local 109.

Dance showdown

Calling all aviation dance groups! Registration is for 12 male or female members, 15-25 years old. Join the Lyceta Eyed Entertainment's Latin Dance Revolution Showdown 2 and represent your barangay. Get an early pass from the Art & Photo Department and attach a photocopy of each member's birth certificate or any valid ID. All group photos and video camera enthusiasts from the regions of the barangay that group will be representing. Dance performance may range from classic ballroom's attire, retro to modern hip-hop, jazz, street dance or a combination of these dance.

A one-day audition is set on July 12, 1-6 p.m. Deadline of submission of registrants and entry forms is 12 noon on July 12. Groups who pass the audition will be informed of their schedule of elimination which starts on July 18. Call 6810404 loc. 116 or visit www.elaborismall.com.

CFM Malolos assembly

Members of the Christian family Movement of the diocese of Malolos will host the CFM Manila Area Assembly on July 11 at San Nicolas Parish Church and School in Poblacion, Bulacan, Bulacan. The whole day affair will begin at 7 a.m. Call 7386741.

LIFESTYLE Fashion&Beauty

Christian Lacroix's swan song?

CHRISTIAN Lacroix, with model in a wedding dress, takes his bow at the finale of his show for the Paris Haute Couture collections on Tuesday.

CHRISTIAN Lacroix Fall/Winter 2009-2010 Haute Couture

CHRISTIAN LACROIX, ON Tuesday, presented what could perhaps be his last haute couture collection—unless an eurozone saviour finds a buyer for the fashion house.

The long financially embattled house announced in May it had filed for bankruptcy. The news, while not surprising—Lacroix, since his rise in the '80s, consistently sent out collections that were critically acclaimed but just as invariably never turned out profitable—still eventually sold the business to Falic Group—mostly reclusive fashion watchers. The French designer, as Monsieur Must Daily described him, is trusted "in the parcel of those remaining couturiers."

In spite of his invisible, Lacroix managed to turn out a "breathtaking" 24-piece collection that "was completely reality-based and wearable, from start to finish," according to WWD, evidently not keeping with the times. This coming from the same man who's best known for the magnificence and extravagance of his clothes.

But what his namesake house lacked literally, his friends apparently more than made up for.

New York Times chief fashion critic Cathy Horyn, on the paper's blog, reports longtime friends—embroiderer, fabric suppliers, clients—had come together to the French designer's aid for the show, with the likes of Bruno Frisoni of Roger Vivier donating shoes.

Lacroix's former boss, Yves Carcelle of LVMH, also attended the show, but brushed off queries if LVMH had any plans to repurchase the house, says Horyn. He was there as a friend, Carcelle said, not as an LVMH rep.

At the show's finale, the designer's friends unfurled a homemade banner that said: "Christian Lacroix forever."

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Php20,378
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- 1 night accommodation at Disney's Hollywood Hotel
- Half day Hong Kong city tour
- Round trip Airport Hotel transfers and Airport transfers
- One day Hong Kong Disneyland Tour

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Php12,812
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- One Day Hong Kong Disneyland Tour

Overnight Disneyland Package
CEB – HKG – CEB
Php15,483
- Lowest round trip Go Fare
- Overnight stay at Disney's Hollywood Hotel
- One Day Hong Kong Disneyland Tour
- Round trip Airport Hotel transfers and Airport transfer

4D/3N HKG Disneyland Package
CEB – HKG – CEB
Php 22,778
- Lowest round trip Go Fare
- 3 nights accommodation at Kowloon side hotel
- 1 night accommodation at Disney's Hollywood Hotel
- Half day Hong Kong city tour
- Round trip Airport Hotel transfers and Airport transfers
- One day Hong Kong Disneyland Tour

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PENINSULA Manila's Nina Couple, Jonathan Cronk and his gorgeous wife Bella

SUGAR baron Dito Lopez and co-celebrator Eva Rimauro

MALACAÑANG Museum curator Jeremy Barns and French author and banker Claude Ribbe

EVELYN and Carlos Freitas and philanthropist Becky Garcia

WITTY and vivacious Margarita Sison, top fashion icon Pitoy Moreno and fashion photo and columnist Tina Jacinto

Maria Sison-Cinco, Jose Gerry Contreras, Angelito Sibal and Bo Cornejo

GORGEOUS Hai Kaufman and GCP president Nestor Jardin

PILITA Corrales and her husband Carlos Lopez

STEEL magnate William Tan and his wife, stylist Katherine, with Rustan's Neely Tantoco, Helen and Robert Lim

GLAM gals TV personality Cory Quirino, Pilipinas Foundation president Vicky Zubiri, the celebrator and Baron Arnas

INTERNATIONAL socialite and philanthropist Mona Gumeta

MULTI TALENTED George Sison with interior designer and businessman Gerry Contreras

George Sison celebrates his birthday with fellow Geminis

MOBIA Philippines general manager William Hamilton-Whyte, Globe Telecom head for consumer wireless business group Ferdinand de la Cruz, and chief financial adviser Hong Kong Lee

CHRISTIAN Yuvienco and Kimy Lim

ROBBIE and Nova Lugay

CORALCON Ai Ai Paz

NOKIA marketing manager Grace Cadar

ANGELIQUE Reyson

GLOBE Telecom's Trina Herrera, Dodjay Talledera and customer engagement head Manny Alegata

GLOBE Telecom's Mark Tejada and Paul Velasquez

STANDING JP Isaac with Pepper Benbenbres (Globe Telecom's head for consumer wireless business group) Ferdinand de la Cruz, me and Thai Airways International general manager Nina Chantarasakul. Seated: Angelique Reyson, Nokia Philippines general manager William Hamilton-Whyte and Lifestyle Asia's Anna Salenga

We were asked to pick up a vellum (a rolled parchment tied with gold and silver) from a posh Mate mall. "Expect the best," Mwah!

Nokia, Globe Platinum night

It was one of those days when I had sweets in my favorite hairdresser Jovimon, then to Rustan's Fourteen to get a new set of today's sweetest aroma for seasons and men alike, Dr. Perricone products; dash home; do my daily power walk; then dash over to the elegant Bel Ristorante at Shangri-La makati for the fantastic Digital Party with Nokia and Globe Platinum.

The event was filled with premium connections, from cuisine and overflowing drinks as they presented the latest wine-inducing Nokia N97.

Dinner, a gourmet's dream come true, was exclusively prepared by chef Thomas Linder, no less. Sultry sequences and magic actress Lynn Sherman belted out great songs during the event, jubilagos.

The Nokia N97 is designed for homosavvy consumers, combining a large 3.5" touch display with a full QWERTY keyboard, 5MP camera, Nokia maps, plus loads of other must-haves in cell phone.

The highlight, Jubilagos, was the cell phone's unveiling, followed by a raffle. Raymundo Francisco was the lucky Globe Platinum subscriber who came home with the prized mobile phone, while other raffle prizes included 40,000 Asia Miles and preloaded P20,000 for Standard Chartered Nokia credit cards.

Welcoming us were Nokia Philippines dynamic general manager William Hamilton-Whyte accompanied by his wife, stewardess beauty Angelique Reyngds, plus Nokia's supposte communications manager Nikka Abes and Globe chief financial adviser Hong Kong Lam. Among the 800 invitees were Pinky Tolentino with Ariel Ace, Natalie and Arnold Cuthbert, Dhaniv Dy and Carl Ang, and the gang of three boys PR., Robbie Aragon, Rio Domingo and Kit Javier.

It was indeed a night to remember.

Diwali opening

There was fun, super rain-pumping fantastic food and great atmosphere, dahlings, when Diwali Gourmet opened its doors at One Shrimboy, Fort Bonifacio.

Super couple Anthony and Kristine Hontiveros are Diwali's best users, jubilagos. Both have an extensive background in the hotel and wine industries.

"Diwali is about the convergence of good products that don't naturally make it to the market," says Anthony. About 90 percent of the products are imported from his home land, Australia, and everything that is sent to this store can be supplied in a large scale upon request. "We already cater to cruise ships and other establishments who need high quality merchandise, making Diwali both a retail venue and a showroom for our wholesale products."

The wine cellar is excellent, not that I'm a wine expert, but I do know what's good or mediocre. Anthony and Kristine invested in wines, dahlings.

So wonder it was standing room only on their awesome opening night...jubilagos.

GUESTS of honor Congressman Eric Singson, Cynthia Villar and Freddie Tinga with Diwali's Anthony Hontiveros

EMILY Topinggo with Angela Montenegro

DIWALI'S Kristine Hontiveros with cousin and eye-catching gal Rose Montenegro

DRACE Singson with Bernadette Puno and daughter Monica

RIBBON enjoying Diwali's Kristine Hontiveros, Tagaig Mayor Freddie Tinga, Congressman Lorna Silverio, Anthony Hontiveros, Australian ambassador Rod Smith and Tagaig first lady Kaye Tinga

VYNECA Singson, Lina Asuncion, Ana Mendoza and Rose Santos

ENTERTAINER Mario Ocampo, political satirist Caesar Saguisa, IPVG's Enrique Gonzalez, Bodjo's Clarence Dimaghilan and Make Up For Ever PR director Carina Gabriel

BE ALL brides on your big day.

Top 10 beauty tips for brides

Get enough sleep, and no asking for 'nose lines' please!

IN THE PAST, AS A FULL-time beauty editor, I took on hair and makeup jobs on the side to supplement my meager income. I worked on advertising photos, music videos and weddings during my free time.

Weddings proved to be the most challenging of them all. I never knew what to expect line to the same time, working the bridal client taught me many things, and the experience is currently helping me get together my own couple info.

I caught up with two other makeup artist friends to exchange ideas on the dos and don'ts when it comes to one's big day, and essentially gain a few tips on how to look one's best (and most photogenic) on the event that took months to prepare.

Their answers were both fabulous and helpful. I am only too happy to share them with you.

10. "Do not sleep later than 12 midnight wine. If your wedding is after lunch," says Rachel Chan, chief makeup artist of Maybelline New York, who has worked with more than 300 brides. "Trust me, it shows. [and] It's so hard to conceal swollen and tired eyes!"

9. Steer clear of foundation that contains titanium dioxide (a common sunscreen ingredient), as it turns white in pictures. This only emphasizes the importance of soaking in to your trial makeup session and reviewing the photographs. On that note, "Do not be late or miss your appointment," says Maymay Balcazama, a former Estée Lauder guest makeup artist who has been doing makeup for five years now. "If you have to [cancel], inform me ahead of time [as it] can/may to the makeup artist and her other clients."

8. Avoid any medical or dermatological treatments like facials, waxing or threading or least a week before the wedding, and never ever the day before. "No amount of makeup can cover bone skin or an [inflamed] pimple," explains Chan.

7. "Do not drastically change your hair color," warns Balcazama. "Asian hair has a lot of copper undertones so if you're going for a light brown shade, you'd have to bleach first." Balcazama recommends going to a reputable salon or a professional stylist. "It will be worth it, otherwise you might end up with orange hair."

6. Don't trust your supplies like blood help. Your makeup artist, hair stylist, photographer and everybody else are there to make sure you look your best, and they deserve it in return with respect. Treat them right and you'll be rewarded with a well-made-up face, great hair and amazing pictures (even, possibly, healing friendships).

Maribel Chan, Makeup Artist for Apple.

5. Avoid unrealistic expectations, at least from the hair and makeup team. "Do not expect us to be magicians or sorcerers," says Balcazama. "Granted, we will do everything we can in our power to make you the most beautiful you, but you'll still look like yourself."

To brides, take note: no asking for 'nose lines' please!

4. "Do not neglect skincare and leave it up to the makeup artist," Balcazama adds. Chan agrees, having advised many women in the past to take care of their complexion. "Clear, blemish-free skin is the perfect canvas for makeup to go on," she says. Besides, if your skin is in great shape, you won't need that much makeup.

3. Try not to stress about the small things. "Brides should leave the art of letting go," says Chan. "As long as you have your photographer, makeup, gown, and of course, groom, then everything else can fall apart and you still will be the most beautiful bride. Let go and everything will be alright."

Says Balcazama: "Stress will manifest in different ways, such as hair loss, dry skin, breakouts, rashes, you name it. And it shows in pictures."

2. "Your wedding day is just one day, do not expend all your energy and be drained afterwards," urges Chan. She also encourages couples to focus on the pending marriage itself, and not just get caught up in the preparations. "Planning a wedding is easy, getting married is not. So make sure that you are sure about it—no doubts, no hesitations, because we are talking about spending the rest of your life with this person."

1. Don't forget to feed your suppliers. "Do not assume that while are needs in the fashion and beauty industry, we do not eat," expresses Balcazama. And Chan shares the same sentiment: "Even if it's just a simple mommy-[email] home cake], it really helps a lot!"

Maribel Chan is the former beauty editor of Cosmopolitan, Seventeen, and Cleo Magazine Philippines. Visit her blog at http://StyleSource.blogspot.com

How to choose the right foundation for one's skin tone

HAVING GOOD foundation is like the perfect little black dress; it is something that will always be in style," says Xean Stevenson, regional training manager of Laura Mercier.

Matching foundation with one's skin tone is easy once you've figured out your skin's undertone. "In Laura Mercier, we make all different foundations and pigments; we have peach undertones, mean ruby undertones and sometimes yellow. I never want to rush somebody saying because I couldn't match their skin tone," explains Stevenson.

Figuring out your skin's undertone is easy. If your skin is pale or rosy, you have pinkish or cool undertones. If your skin is yellowish, golden or honey, your undertone is yellow or warm. And if you are olive-toned or a blend of both, you have neutral undertones.

If you have trouble deciding what undertone you have, have it on how you tan. If you get dark easily, chances are your skin tone is warm. But if you find it difficult to tan or you do not get dark at all, you have cool undertones.

Kelly Hiso, Stylist of the trade

Playing around with finishes can give your skin a fresh look. "To match your skin tone, you can mix different formulas to customize your skin finish. You can dramatize from sill sheer, matte-looking, powder and illuminating, so it's going to be based on what finish you want," says Stevenson.

Oil-free foundation helps you achieve the most natural "no makeup" look with sheer coverage, and is ideal for all skin types. Moisturizing foundation is especially formulated for drier or more mature skin and gives a more complete coverage. Mineral powder, on the other hand, is made with active amino acids to clear skin of toxins, promote healthy skin cell growth and fight the aging process.

The oil-free foundation is rich and luxurious. It offers full coverage by hiding fine lines and imperfections through its light-reflecting qualities. An oil-free, water-resistant formula, a stick foundation will work best. To eliminate oil and shine, use foundation powder. Or a natural, down finish, a tinted moisturizer can take the place of a foundation.

Makeup shouldn't be too complicated. "The idea is not having to go home and redo your makeup. You can just pull out one or two product, add that to and you're perfect," Stevenson says.

For ladies who easily run and can't get the exact color depending on the season, Stevenson offers this tip. "You can have one base foundation and have a darker one that you can use all year where you need to mix in some color. Or use a bronzing gel that has the same color of your foundation. It will deepen the color of your foundation so you don't have to go out and buy new products."

"I like my clients to have a well-rounded makeup wardrobe that in seasons change, you just need to add on a few of the basics. Then replenish your core items," says Stevenson.

More tips

- **Primer.** Primer is the bridge between skin care and makeup, as it gives the just-applied makeup look all day.
- **Foundation.** Pick out the perfect formula of foundation, so consider the shade, coverage and finish. Always select a foundation that is best for your skin type.
- **Concealer.** If you need more coverage, select a concealer that's a little heavier. Never select a heavier foundation, because skin has to show through.
- **Powder.** Seal everything off by using translucent powder.

If you follow these four steps, you do not have to smooth throughout the day. The only thing you should redo is your lip color.

LIFESTYLE Fashion&Beauty

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Where to go for treatment of dry hair and scalp

SUNSILKIDOS IN COOPERATION with Rustan's hairboutique Greenhills recently invited me to experience their 30-minute Intra Hair Treatment to restand, rebound and damaged hair.

MAKEOVER 911

Kimm Sakai

The hair and scalp are analyzed to determine which treatment to use. My stylist, Greta, chose Calea Luxe to repair my curly, tinted strands and extend the life of my hair color. My brother's hairbo Boyet, chose Quo Time Restore for his fragile hair.

Those with dry hair and scalp need Intra-rare Rich treatment. After the solution is applied on one's hair, the BC Mist Heat Therapy machine was placed to open up the hair cuticle and allow treatment to penetrate even more. The hair cuticle was revealed while negative ions eliminated frizz and restored gracious flow causes the replacement (smell) of hair and scalp. The treatment also aids in blood circulation. It makes the hair shine, become soft and tangle-free. Both our scalps were calm, free and less oily for a couple of days with less falling hair.

Rustan's hairboutique now offers salon services like makeup, blow-dry, eyebrow shaping, threading and manicure-pedicure. The shoulder and back massages are particularly of interest as relieving pain one gets from carrying heavy bags and crouching on a computer all day. Call Rustan's Greenhills at 8405299 or visit www.rustanshairboutique.com.

Facial massage

Going by Shiseido boutique at Greenbelt 5 and avail of its Shiseido Ra Facial Massage. The aestheticians will determine the type of facial you need based on your age or immediate concern.

The products are all from the Ginzanen line: 1. Pioneers it for oily, acne-prone skin and makes pores look smaller. It does not have astringents though, so nothing much can be done with your pimples. But blackheads and whiteheads can be sucked out by the face cleanser. 2. Blow cure provides intense hydration and helps prevent premature aging and stress. 3. Smoothcare is formulated with Ceboxilla for wrinkle-resistance skin. Ideally requested by those in their 30s and mid-40s and those with powdered skin with visible wrinkles. 4. White Lucent targets

SHISEIDO Ra Facial Massage

spots, freckles and superficial pigmentation. 5. Revival fights the three d's of aging: deep wrinkles, dark spots and sagging skin.

Every facial has double cleansing (remedy, treatment to open pores, vacuum to suck out comedones and impurities, facial massage to improve circulation. Prices: P1,400 and P1,900.

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BEAUTY BY

Vanity Pocket

Fragrance of femininity

Chanel No. 5 is a fragrance classic. Chanel No. 5 starts off with notes of ylang-ylang and rose oil, followed by grasse jasmine and May rose. Sandalwood and vanilla. Chanel No. 5 was created when Coco Chanel commissioned renowned perfumer Ernest Beaux to create various perfumes for her ever-changing bottle for.

C—which commands a recreation of the fresh scent given off by the lakes and trees during the midnight sun inside the Arctic Circle—was the chosen fragrance, hence the name. Chanel is exclusively distributed by Rustan Commercial Corp. and is available at all Rustan's Department Stores.

All-day moisturizing lipstick

Covergirl's new Outlast all-day moisturizing lipstick provides lip color lasting up to 18 hours, without transfer-top when eating or drinking. The base contains lipids infused with antioxidant levels of Vitamin E, jojoba oil and green tea extract. Moisture has been enhanced with shea butter, cocoa butter, aloe butter, glycerin and Vitamin E and shea butter by Tar

Outlast Lip color comes in 22 flavors grouped within six color families: Nudes and Roses, Blooms and Berries, Corals and Reds, Nudes and Spices, Browns and Spices, and Burgundies and Wine Tones.

Covergirl is available in all leading department stores and is exclusively distributed by Rustan Marketing Corp.

Moisturizing hand sanitizer

Carmela nail polish, salicon and hand sanitizer created up with Carmela Moisturizing Hand Sanitizer. It has an alcohol-based formulation that is fortified with germ-killing agent, triclosan. It is also infused with vitamin E beads that act as moisturizers. Moreover, its gentle but potent formula helps relieve dry hands. Carmela Hand Sanitizer comes in a 60-ml tube and is available in leading drugstores, supermarkets, department stores, and health and beauty shops nationwide.

Blue velvet for nails

Carmela's new nail polish color, Blue Velvet, is a deep, dark blue shade with its finish glossy finish. Blue Velvet is an addition to Carmela's dark polish families such as Black Velvet, Mirror Pharoah and Poppy Red. All colors are available in mini 8-ml bottles. Black Velvet, Mirror Pharoah, Poppy Red also come in mini 15-ml bottles at leading department stores, supermarkets, drugstores, convenience stores, and health and beauty shops nationwide.

LIFESTYLE Fashion&Beauty

The must-haves that got away

Berlin reminds me of the Snoopy thongs I ended up wearing until the poor things lost elasticity

By Pam Pastor

COUNTLESS PEOPLE EQUATE traveling with shopping. I can't blame them. When you're in a new city with shiny new malls, what's to stop you from bringing your wallet out for a little exercise?

When I think of Berlin, I see glorious sale racks at H&M, dresses bought for around P500 and the Snoopy thongs I ended up wearing until the poor things lost elasticity.

Dusseldorf will always remind me of the killer Puma boots I got in a train station store one fury Saturday. Vogue forum skipping the outlets and hitting the outlet streets.

The little shops in New York's West Village are always a treat. I spent hours in SA raiding bins bigger for vintage-looking shirts. The busiest in Singapore is my spot for funny finds.

From Cambodia, I hauled home dozens of colorful scarves and fabric bags. From Paris, two pairs of boatneckwith boots. Hong Kong is always a sure winner—I always end up bringing home twice my luggage coming from there.

But not this time.

Because this trip, which, ironically took place smack dab in the middle of Hong Kong's Shopping Festival, will always be defined by the things I did not buy.

Not to say that I didn't shop. I raided chaos branches of H&M, went to Muji and Uniqlo and engaged in my favorite 90s sport in Shanghai—speed shopping.

But there were many things I did not buy, and it here's not time to learn the now than I'm back in Manila.

This isn't a story of heartbreak—although it feels like it. This is a tale of two cities, of love and shopping and the things I didn't buy.

Hot pink Doc Martens

It was love at first sight. I spotted the hot pink Doc Martens in Mongkok. They were on sale—marked down from HK$1,100 to just HK$799.

That night, I couldn't stop thinking about them. The next morning, I posted

"This is seriously considering buying hot pink Doc Martens. Should I? Shouldn't I?" in my Facebook status.

People egged me on. "Get it! You'll regret it!" they wrote, their exclamation points jumping at me.

I finally got the courage to try them on. I was right, they looked really cool. But I was not used to them being uncomfortable.

My purple Doc Martens from my teen and I aren't sure this pair wouldn't do the same.

I left the store without buying the boots for another reason. I had my eyes on another pair of shoes—the black Nike Air Presto.

Nike Air Presto

Friends have been going on and on about the new Nike Air Presto, sporting a neutral, go-glitz in their color so they remember their old Presto pairs from the early 2000s.

I didn't really care. I like Nike Dunks more. But that was before I saw two girls wearing them Queens Road in Hong Kong Central District wearing matching black leggings and shiny black Nike Air Presto.

Call it envy, call it shoe lust, I knew I needed my own pair from the had other plans.

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Deconstructed fashion

THANKS TO DESIGNER Rei Kawakubo of Comme des Garçons for introducing deconstructed clothes to the western runway in the '90s. The once seemingly appalling apparel is now embraced and loved by fashion bloggers and stylists around the world.

From sad pink sailor look-alike, but there is something liberating about unbuttoned clothes.

Could it be the effortless appeal, the deliberate cast-off feel makes them so sexy? Or perhaps the sensuality of undone and sliced pieces of fabric skimming the body in criss-cross fashion?

One thing's for sure, deconstructed [illegible] are beautiful, and its come season, pieces of these never seem to give those rugged threads justice.

This season, deconstruct to reconstruct to the max of the grunge.

Mabuhay!

Jenni J. Epperson

Materials:

T-shirt, scissors, safety pins in different sizes

Steps:

1. Pick out a plain T-shirt you'd like to work on.

2. Cut the shirt from the middle and work your way through the sides, avoiding the edge. Cut the edge if you want to go for a different style.

3. Make various cuts such as long, short, diagonal, straight, and even crooked ones.

4. Attach different sizes of safety pins to the incision made.

E-mail: [illegible]@inquirer.com.ph

Never a fashion basketcase

Gigi Phua-Lim of the gift-packaging shop Basketcase sticks to comfortable, quick-change fashion

NOTHING TERRIFIES ME more than being ordinary, to the point that I obsess about it" exclaims Gigi Phua-Lim.

Born and raised in Cebu, this proud Cebuano refuses to let anything keep her down. Her philosophy: "Dust yourself up and go on."

Gigi, however, knows how to slow down. Her morning begins at daybreak, when she walks through her manicured garden to enjoy the fragrance of flowers. She then feeds the neighborhood mga-mga birds, which seem to have come to expect her every morning, then she feeds the pond. She spends an hour of quiet time sitting by the waterfall.

THE WORKING CLASS

Rina Shaun Go, Contributor

Then she shoos her daughter off to school and heads to her job as building administrator for Triumph Building, a position nurtured for her by her own. (Having married into a construction Chinese family, she stresses, is no walk in the park and is a role she does not necessarily for "the faint-hearted.)

In 1997, she and her friends noticed that, in gift-giving, there was not much proper attention given to the packaging. They then hit upon the idea of setting up a business that packaged gifts elegantly and attractively, making presentation a key element of gift-giving.

With the creative use of ribbons, color, boxes and other containers, their packaging caught everyone's eye and thoughts. Soon, the giver got into the act. Practical Basketcase was born.

The team proved to be a success, servicing corporate accounts such as embassies, hotels, schools, hospitals, as well as weddings.

Gigi also put up From My Kitchen, which supplies Basketcase with [illegible].

Cooking

One [illegible] rejected her "gourmet cooking" on the day of the shoot. Gigi claims she never cooked at all, so the choice was limited to boiled or fried selections.

But she decided to build up her library of cookbooks and take over the kitchen, posing over cookbooks and whipping up fried, Italian, Thai, Chinese or Middle Eastern dishes.

For her, everything must be properly prepared. Cream soup must have a dollop of sour cream and slivers of almonds, just the way she likes it.

Her fashion-icon's greatest pleasure is good food, something he has passed on to his grandchildren. Their lunch packs for school contain fresh spinach salads with mashed salmon and carbs. That sort of thing.

Fashion role of thumb

When it comes to dressing, Gigi follows one rule of thumb: her clothes must be comfortable. She must be able to get in and out of her clothes in seconds.

She uses funky accessories, artistic jewelry, unstructured earrings, retro eyewear, beaded flats and oversized bags.

Gigi graduated from Ateneo

Smarter than a smart phone

msung's Jet 'no longer udget r techies, t] something yone can use'

ianca Carandang
Reporter

SAMSUNG'S booth at CommonWeb

THE SAMSUNG Jet smart phone

THE SAMSUNG Jet is sleek, stylish and functional—perfect for on-the-go fashionistas.

"DAYS, MOBILE INTERNET just a novelty. It's a necessity. Blogging and constant social making becoming bigger than It's essential to have a phone will help you keep up with online activities.

Edit smart phones are lo- ningly becoming popular, "m not merely the easiest to especially for people who used to conventional non- call cell phones.

mers such as the iPhone ed revolutionize the system, at the same time, the Mac OS ed to be confusing for a ld of techies. Windows

ckily, new phones are rently being introduced to market, making it possible mobile phone science fiction to use from a wider set of ers.

the Commonwealth confer- held recently in Singapore, mber of brands unveiled latest phones to the market. of these was Samsung's lat- mobile innovation, the Jet. Corey yeo, SEO corse mobile ns) are produced," said ngbee Lee, vice president of sung's overseas marketing ile communications division.

"The needs of people are changing; even-level phones cannot offer just the basic services anymore. People want good cameras, they want music, they want internet browsing. The Jet is what we call the 'smarter than smart phone' because it's easy to use but provides the features of a smart phone."

She added, "The Jet is our first step in democratizing the smart phone. No longer a gadget for techies, it's something that anyone can use. The best part is, people can add the widgets that they want in order to personalize their phones."

Hongsik Cho, senior vice president of the corporate sales sales and marketing group of the mobile communications division added, "The trend for mobile phones is toward the touch trend; people want a smart phone. The Jet makes it more accessible to them."

The Jet, aside from having a sleek and easy-to-use interface, comes equipped with features that would make techies drool, but without sacrificing style and accessibility.

"We're very ambitious about the Jet," Lee said. "After all, an innovative product always works in any market."

E-mail the author at bianca.carandang@yahoo.com

Top 5 things we love about the Jet

1. It's super fast. Better than most smart phones, the Jet has an accelerated application processor speed of 800MHz. That's about as fast as desktop computers were a few years ago; you can browse up to five windows on the internet without a glitch.

2. Bluetype display. Its 3.1 inch WVGA AMOLED display is four times sharper than your typical screen—great for viewing photos and watching videos of your friends! Its display also has a 160-degree viewing angle, so you won't make out or anything.

3. Easy touch screens. You can use one finger instead of the usual two to zoom in on photos or surf the internet. Thanks to its speed, the response of the phone to your finger is instant; plus, its "smart unlock" and TouchWiz 2.0 technologies allow you to focus on the screen instead of typing passwords or names.

4. You can make it completely yours. Add widgets of your choice to make a phone that's designed to fit how you interact—no wasted applications here! Over 30 widgets are available on the phone; calls were notable for downloading on the go.

5. No need for annoying file conversions. You can watch your favorite shows or listen to music files directly after downloading without the hassle of having to make or convert them to a compatible format. Other functions include GPS Geotagging, 3D Map Navigation, and DVD-like video playback recording.

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The must-haves that got away

Turn page 81

I visited a pink resin one of the many sneaker shops at Fu Yuen street. It was XXS but it was too big. I scouted an XXXS pair. Moreover the last couple of days searching Nike stores, sneaker stores and sports stores everywhere—Mongkok, Central, Causeway Bay, Kowloon Bay and Sha Tin. But my pink continued to elude me. So

went to over 20 stores and ended up left empty-handed every time I checked. So one had the Premiere in my size.

The harder it was to find, the more I wanted it. And not just because it's the first time I'm buying myself something that's extra-extra-extra-small.

Moonlight Rhapsody
Illustrated planner

While my friends were going crazy over the Digital Reduced and camera they bought, I kept visiting at the Moonlight Rhapsody Planner at CityChain. Moonlight Rhapsody is an illustrated diary from the brand Reduced Bicycle from Korea.

It was adorable, so all signed. And at HK$149 (around P1,000), it was also a bit pricey. It was even more impractical because I already bought two Hobonichi planners this year—a monthly one and a weekly one.

"Just draw on your own planner," my friend said. "But I can't draw!" I said.

Ana's Swedish Meatballs

How far would you go for a meatball? Because one must very far. When we finally reached Ikea, we ate 40 of those meatballs.

Believe me, that wasn't enough. Because the next day we started craving those bloated balls. We really should have brought home those frozen packs.

'Twenties Girl' by Sophie Kinsella

At the airport on our way back, I was surprised to see a new Sophie Kinsella book in a newsstand—a paperback large-print edition of "Twenties Girl" being sold for HK$104.

"It will be cheaper in Manila," I told my friends. But when I lugged on to Amazon.com, I discovered the book is available only for preorder (one is scheduled to be released until July 21. "Aaugh! I should have bought it!" I told friends.

This really is the opposite of Imelda's excess.

"Twenties Girl" isn't the only thing I've looked up online. Since our return, I've spent hours Googling hot pink Doc Martens (found them...and at a cheaper price!), XXS Nike Air Prestige (no luck yet), the Moonlight Rhapsody Planner (it's left me so frustrated that I've actually started drooling on my Moleskine) and Swedish Meatball recipes (so many of them, I can't decide which one to use).

Now, when I think of HK, I think of cheap pink boots, black sneakers that look fantastic with black leggings, meatballs swimming in tomato sauce and books I can't have.

But this can be a good thing. Because the many things we did not buy give us a good reason to go back.

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Editor Bienvenido G. Yñiguez

ENTERTAINMENT

FINAL FAREWELL Michael Jackson speaks during the memorial service for his brother Michael Jackson at the Staples Center in Los Angeles. With him are, from left, siblings Tito, Randy and Jermaine. More photos and highlights on page F6. Entertainment

Thumbs up for Lloydie

By Marinel R. Cruz

COMEDIENNE-SINGER-ACTOR DE LOS ALAS says she does not see anything wrong if her friend Stella Stevenson will have John Lloyd Cruz, who is nine years younger, as a boyfriend.

"Both are matured and mature enough to make their own decisions," Ai Ai tells Inquirer Entertainment. "As long as they are not hurting other people's feelings, it's OK. But they're so young."

Stella, however, hinted that she and John Lloyd are merely close friends. The actress-TV host said this on Monday on the ABS-CBN show she co-hosts with Ai Ai ("Stella and Ai").

On the same show, Stella's mother Annabelle Rama revealed that her daughter had arranged for her to meet John Lloyd in a dinner date last week. She added that she has "given up on Stella" and wanted John Lloyd "as in-laws her daughter's feelings.

More secretive

"Between us, Stella is more secretive," says Ai Ai. "We often joke about her love life on the set, but that's how she is guess."

Ai Ai says she understands why Annabelle is very protective of her only daughter. "All moms want the best for their children, especially for someone like Stella who's just recovering from a traumatic marriage."

"Stella and Ai" celebrated its 100th episode on Monday with cash giveaways to the studio audience and home viewers.

"We feel blessed that we've lasted this long," says Ai Ai. "In the beginning, we felt extremely pressured that we had to compete with a long-running show (Tito) in the rival network."

On July 25, she will renew her talent contract with Star Cinema, the movie arm of ABS-CBN. A film with former President Joseph Estrada will be the first of a three-movie deal for Ai Ai. If things go well, she says, filming will start on July 22 for an October screening.

Ai Ai will leave for a two-night show with Aiai Delas Alas in San Francisco in August and a concert with Augustus stars in September.

"I'll do that they're together," Ai Ai says of Stella and John Lloyd.

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3 HANNAH MONTANA THE MOVIE
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6 ICE AGE 3: (DIGITAL 3D)
7 BENTE
8 IndieSine: DC88
9 VILLA ESTRELLA
10 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen

ERMITA

1 THE HAUNTED
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METRO EAST

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2 HANNAH MONTANA THE MOVIE
3 ICE AGE 3: DAWN OF THE DINOSAURS
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5 VILLA ESTRELLA
6 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
7 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
8 BENTE

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3 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
4 HANNAH MONTANA THE MOVIE

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1 HANNAH MONTANA THE MOVIE
2 ICE AGE 3: DAWN OF THE DINOSAURS
3 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
4 THE HAUNTED

STA. ROSA

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2 HANNAH MONTANA THE MOVIE
3 ICE AGE 3: DAWN OF THE DINOSAURS
4 VILLA ESTRELLA

LIPA

1 BLOOD: THE LAST VAMPIRE
2 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
3 VILLA ESTRELLA
4 ICE AGE 3: DAWN OF THE DINOSAURS

DASMARINAS

1 ICE AGE 3: DAWN OF THE DINOSAURS
2 IP MAN
3 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
4 VILLA ESTRELLA

IMUS

1 ICE AGE 3: DAWN OF THE DINOSAURS
2 HANNAH MONTANA THE MOVIE
3 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
4 VILLA ESTRELLA

STARMILLS

1 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
2 VILLA ESTRELLA
3 THE COFFIN
4 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
5 ICE AGE 3: DAWN OF THE DINOSAURS
6 HANNAH MONTANA THE MOVIE

ANGELES

1 ICE AGE 3: DAWN OF THE DINOSAURS
2 HANNAH MONTANA THE MOVIE
3 VILLA ESTRELLA
4 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen

TACLOBAN

1 ICE AGE 3: Dawn Of The Dinosaurs
2 DRAG ME TO HELL
3 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen

BACOLOD

1 ICE AGE 3: DAWN OF THE DINOSAURS
2 REVOLUTIONARY ROAD
3 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
4 FROM WITHIN
5 VILLA ESTRELLA
6 THE PERFUME

ILOILO

1 ICE AGE 3: DAWN OF THE DINOSAURS
2 THE TAKING OF PELHAM 123
3 VILLA ESTRELLA
4 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen
5 ECHELON CONSPIRACY
6 TRANSFORMERS: Revenge of the Fallen

Bossing's new lady

By Rayzel Son Diego Jr.

THERE'S NOT A DROP OF Pinoy blood in his new leading lady's veins, but Vic Sotto says their Thai-Australian model-cum-actress Paula Taylor felt right at home on the set of the new romantic comedy "Boy 'K Bayot" "Love On Line (LOL)."

Taylor reportedly hit it off with the cast and crew and would often join them, feasting on local delicacies.

She has a healthy appetite, Boying said of his new leading lady and isn't finicky at all.

"She likes strip and oven-roasted dungeness," Sotto recalled. "I asked her: Do you want to know the ingredients of dinuguan? She just smiled and answered, 'I don't want to know.' Cowboy ayo."

Taylor also loves singing, which is similar to the Thai soap Tom Yum Kung, she explained.

"Still she could pass for a Filipina, she responded audibly. 'Salamat po.'"

She has picked up a whole dozen of Tagalog words of late — like "Manoi ako (It's hot here)."

Dong, ex-star Lea Salonga, who plays her uncle in "SOL," taught her a star word in Filipino — telling her it means "fun" instead.

"I was saying it all day. When I asked a friend about it, I learned it was a bad word," she told Inquirer Entertainment.

Still, she has adjusted quite nicely in the country.

"I've been spending a lot of time in Manila. Last year, I was here every month. I'm almost a local now," she quipped.

Meeting Enteng

It was her first time to meet "Bossing" Vic Sotto though. "But I watched videos of his old movies (like the 'Enteng Kabisote' series) on YouTube."

Aside, for his part, caught her role on "Pinoy Big Brother" and is familiar with her work as co-star for Channel [7] and as model for various local companies.

"But I only learned recently that she has a sitcom in Thailand ("Thai Love Next Door") and that she starred in four movies there," Sotto said.

Taylor has nothing but kind words for her leading man. "He's very charming. He makes sure of his co-stars. He's pretty down-to-earth in spite of his stature."

Apart from being a big star in Thailand, Taylor has also done "a small, low-budget Hollywood film," titled "Darkness" with William Hurt and Gary Sinise.

She was initially daunted by the prospect of meeting Dean whose last movie is "Rambo" but she didn't have lots of scenes, but we were together in the workshops. I learned a lot about technique just by watching him."

She said that she got to spend more time with Sheen who plays her partner in the supernatural drama directed by John Pasquin.

"He's sweet and fun. I told him I watched his movie "The Princess Bride" more than once. He said it was his favorite movie as well."

She even bragged to her dad: "Remember the guy in 'Princess Bride'? He's my husband now!"

VIC Sotto with new leading lady, Thai-Australian Paula Taylor

MYMP performs at 'Bandstand' contest

"THE BANDSTAND" MUSIC contest will have the first elimination round for group 2 of its 15 competing groups tonight at 7 at Manila Ocean Park near the Quirino Grandstand. Most Park, Manila. Competing bands are The Moonflowers, Plow, Project, Fried Ice and Summer Guio. Guest performers is MYMP. At stake is P100,000 cash, a P500,000 live performance contract at Manila Ocean Park, and a Sony Music record deal.

MYMP

Eastwood City Central Plaza, Li Ma, Quezon City. MJ Inspirations will also be present.

The show is part of Eastwood City and PM radio station Magic 89.9's "Friday Madness" special event.

Hi tribute at Eastwood

Eastsiders Ramon and Lalay Mojares join other ISSO singers in a Michael Jackson tribute concert at 8 p.m. at the

SARAH Geronimo

'Spread the Smiles'

Sarah Geronimo, Sony Educasa's "Smile Ambassador," performs tomorrow, 2 p.m., at SM North Edsa's The Block to celebrate "Spread the Smiles," a project aimed at collecting a million smiles to raise P1 million for travel.

Every smile photo collected from different venues is equivalent to a peso donation to Unicef. Anyone can donate a smile at Sony Connect. Experience Shops nationwide, Smile Mondo is participating SM malls; and through www.sonyentertainment.com/spreadthesmiles.

Month-long access to int'l news channels

THIS MONTH, MOVIEMAX Premier Channel (channel 222), keeps subscribers abreast with news, issues and views as it provides a month-long free access to some of the leading international news channels.

"Issues with Jane Velez-Mitchell," a look at world issues and "Nancy Grace," a show of top crime stories and court-related ones, air on CNN Headline News (channel 128), weekdays, 8 p.m.

Also on weekdays, CNBC (channel 111), a business news and information channel, presents "Squawk Box" at 7 a.m. and "CNBC's Cash Flow" at 10 a.m.

From July 23 to 31, the 24-hour news channel BBC will air a live coverage of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's State of the Nation Address on July 27 and "Countdown to 2010: BBC Leadership Forum," a live two-hour discussion of the issues and aspirations of presidential hopefuls.

Rom-com reality series

Premiering on ETC on July 16 is "How Come the Opposite?" Season 2 at 8 p.m. The romantic comedy reality series follows nine newly-married couples in trying to stay true to each other's vows no matter what.

Also airing this month is the reality show "Survivor 2: Beach Bodies" on July 12 at 8:30 p.m. and "Biggest 2: Young Stars" on July 19 at 8:30 p.m.

Flapjack's quests

"The Marvelous Misadventures of Flapjack," an animated series that centers around the nautical adventures of a swashbuckling kite, airs weekdays at 5:30 p.m. on Cartoon Network.

Flapjack and the whale

Viewers can join Flapjack and the gang as they test their pirate skills with different quests every weekday. Participants can deeply key in the correct answer to win! Log for Globe, Sun, Smart, Talk 'N' Text and Touch Mobile or log on to www.CartoonNetwork.com.ph.

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Ruben V. Nepales

Empty (coffin) talk and other sidelights at the Michael Jackson memorial

LOS ANGELES—COMING FROM the Michael Jackson memorial service that was dazzlingly staged with dignity we stepped outside the Staples Center and were hurled back to earth reality at the sight of TV crews waiting to pounce on the fans for sound bites.

A mic was thrust at us, with a question: "Do you think Michael Jackson's body was really inside that coffin?"

Who cares?

Who controls these hollywood rumors?

Vacant seats

Speaking of empty, there were quite a few vacants seats throughout the Staples Center during the memorial service. Right behind us was a row of at least 10 unoccupied seats. We felt bad for the many fans outside who were hoping to get tickets at the last minute.

We thought Stevie Wonder's "Stevie Dreams 'Heal Learns' Is Incorrect"/"Dad Wasn't Go Where I Go" number was simple but very moving especially when he cried out, "Michael, why didn't you stay?"

John Mayer's guitar rendition of "Human Nature" (from Jackson's "Thriller" album), paired with the vocals of the backup singers in the song's chorus, inspired a reflective vibe.

MAGIC Johnson

The performances by the other singers were appropriately somber but we've heard so-so-dying all day—what if Aretha Franklin showed up and just let go, so to speak?

Rare glimpse

The audience likewise responsively to Rhonda Shields' emotional reminiscence of her sisters with Michael, which provided a rare personal glimpse of him as a friend and a person, not as a very private superstar.

Where was Quincy?

But where was Quincy Jones? And Beyonce, who was announced as one of the performers?

"Gone Too Soon," sung by Usher at the service, was the first song of the King of Pop that we heard on the radio right after we got married. But he has tragically left us—too early.

Saddest circumstances

It was interesting to finally see Michael's kids minus the masks that they wore during public outings. Quite sad, too, that on the first time that they faced the public, it was under the saddest of circumstances.

We'll take comfort in Magic Johnson's words stating that the three children "have the most incredible grandmother that God has put on earth." Michael's well-known affection for his mom, Katherine Jackson, augurs well for the kids. May she live long to guide and be around for the children's sake.

Mariah's rendition of "I'll Be There" with Trey Lorenz did not live up to her very soulful 1992 live recording (also with Trey) of that Jackson 5 classic.

It was also tough for Shaheen Jahanbani to come on and emote "What's Lovin' You" right after a video clip showed a 14-year-old Michael singing that same song with incredible poise and emotion. But the fact, who's only 12, showed that he really has talent.

Lament

We shared Aljenice Kenny Ortega's lament that only less than two weeks ago, Michael was rehearsing (and doing well, based on the video that showed him singing and dancing a number) for his London concert on that very same stage as the Staples Center.

We're definitely saving our memorial service ticket, gold and blue wristbands, and the glossy souvenir program, filled with photos and dedications to Michael by his family, which was given free to all those who attended the event.

The dawn exactly of the elephants of the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey circus from a once season in downtown Los Angeles to the Staples Center apparently took place without a hitch.

The 36 elephants managed to make it to the back of the Staples Center before many spectators for the memorial service started showing up. The majestic pachyderms are part of the circus that was scheduled to begin performing at the Staples Center Wednesday, the day after the memorial.

The memorial was dignified, not circus-like as some had feared.

MICHAEL's kids Paris Michael Katherine (left), Prince Michael I (right) and Prince Michael II

JENNIFER Hudson

JOHN Mayer

Award. In fact, it was replete with the pomp: Queen Latifah reading a poem, "We Had Him," which was written by Maya Angelou specifically for Michael and the occasion.

E-mail the columnist at rnepales_2005@yahoo.com and read his blog, "The Nepales Report," on http://blogs.inquirer.net/nepalesreport.

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LIVING Stars

Editor Bonnie G. Velarde

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A salute to good old values

From page G1

"Pinoy Dream Academy Little Dreamer" wowed the crowd with his rendition of "I Do to Believe" along with Rap Inhuser and Waiting Shorties.

"Be Dawn vocalist Joli Vergara was awesome in his version of "Magdilaw," while theater stalwarts Ian Alviola, Monsha Lourbengan-Soto, Andi Cerezo, Michael Williams, Nabel Avila, Bimbo Escalante and Anna Feo did an impressive medley of Ben Rechard's songs.

Rob Ledesma sang an inspirational number titled "It's About Time" with daughter Isabella Grace. Television host a duet with youngest child Hana in "The Climb."

"Pinoy Dream Academy" graduates Liezel Garcia, Cris Entes, Miguel Mendoza, Olivia Malcolm and Seo Nichols performed a medley of songs on unity and love for the environment: "Howrk Battery," "Mundo Ko Ang Kapalgiran," "Young Young Pasadena" and "Paraiso."

Arguably the highlight of the two-hour show was the surprise performance of Charice Pempengco. Dressed in a hoodie ruffled tube dress and black wedges, Charice sang "Note to God," a cover of a Dianne Warren composition which is her first single from a forthcoming album she is currently recording in the United States.

Dolphy led the roster in singing "I Feel the World." He also delivered the program's closing address. He said it's the dream of actors like him to "impart good values to kids and leave a good memory."

He added: "The foundation has become an instrument of spreading those good values. I'm (humble) that I'm part of it."

At Ai-Ai las Alas talked about the the families aided by Bayan Microfinance.

John Lloyd Cruz discussed the impact of E-Media, the pioneer in curriculum-based educational television (DTV).

"Umaganag Kay Gandy" co-host and newscaster Bernadette Sembrano talked about Angkla Kapuso Ko, while dame Carmi spoke of how the La Mesa Watershed was rehabilitated through Bantay Kalikasan.

Willie Revillame introduced Bayanihan, a program that helped establish communities like Real, Dampugan and Puerto Princesa.

Last month, Gina Lopez, managing director of ABS-CBN Foundation, launched the Kapit Bisig Para sa Ilog Pasig project, which aims to rehabilitate the Pasig River and its tributaries.

E-mail metro@inquirer.com.ph

BEFORE making it on local television, Andy toured the world as a professional tennis player.

From...

From page G4

ideas from acquaintances and friends who have really cute homes," he said. "I like dark wood. It makes the place look like a hotel."

Andy bought most of his furniture from a shop called Home in Greenhills. This included the living room couch, cabinets and an antique desk he described as "a little bit weird and abstract." He also purchased wooden sticks, vases and other décor from Tiwa Decline In Origin, Pasig City.

When not busy with work, Andy spends most of his time at the pool house where the pool and gym are located. "This area has one of the best layouts I've seen so far. I'm normally out here tanning or in the jacuzzi," he said. "I bring friends here to party. Up here, we have the best view of the city."

Andy continued: "I plan to stay in this place for another year. If everything goes well in my career, I hope to keep the place a little longer."

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BY FRANCIS DRAKE

THIS WEEK TODAY: You're very close to one of the human qualities. You're interested in people. Nevertheless, personally, you are private and often very aloof. People admire your efficiency and organization. Several times in your life, you will make interesting, radical changes. If this inevitable, sometimes exercise around you.) This year could be one of those years, because it's the beginning of a new cycle in your evolution.

NUMBERS OF (Years, Days, Months, Dates, Birth Path, Lucky Numbers, All Birth Paths, Month planet)

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Today you're glad to be involved with others. Whether it's in groups or with the efforts of friends, you want to help others who are less fortunate. Many issues can't be solved overnight.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You might approach people in power in one of two influences in a direct, subtle way for almost what you want. Or perhaps you yourself will seek the support of others to make impossible changes.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Your intuition is unusual today. You might be attracted to a new relationship or exploration. By cause your appreciation of beauty is heightened, you want to use and live surrounded by beauty.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Someone could be unsympathetic to you and give you something today. Conversely, you might be in a position to help someone. Your ability to raise funds is excellent.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You have strong feelings of sympathy for a partner or friend today. By acting, you can be inspired to help the person you will. Someone might love you very much.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Make sure your plans at work are realistic and flexible today. Your attention to detail is so strong that you might be to afterpast the important. Use your insight instead of knowledge.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Your artistic abilities are excellent today. You have wonderful imagery. You likes. Those of you who are help needy children will appreciate the opportunity to do so.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You're willing to be patient and sympathetic to family members today. You'd do well to help. Unfortunately, a family member might be willing to help you.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You're unusual to coordinate about your finances today. Be fair to new trends. This is a good thing, also optimistic mind is a terrific favorable time.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You might be tempted to buy something impulsively today. An urgent today that is beyond your active range. (Champagne tastes on a beer budget.)

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You have strong feelings of compassion and sympathy toward others today. Because of this, you will look for ways to help those who are in need.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Spend time with close and different relatives whenever you can today. You easily get the attention of others today. Love runs today.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS

1 Fuss
5 Hit with a glancing blow
10 Crossing
14 Talented fellow
15 Beach
16 Bridge partner
17 Lobby
18 Fighting words
19 Rock concert effect
20 Mexican "coffee"
21 Mexican "coffee" liqueur
23 Mexican "coffee" liqueur
24 Mexican "coffee" liqueur
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30 Mexican "coffee" liqueur
31 Mexican "coffee" liqueur
32 Mexican "coffee" liqueur

From laid-back to fast-track living

Fil-Aussie TV host moves into a condo unit after growing up near the beach

HOME BODY

DARK wood is a perfect match to the yellow walls, says Andy.

ANDY buys most of his furniture pieces from a shop called Momo.

By Marinel R. Cruz
Photos by Jim Goloy Pancake

FILIPINO-AUSTRALIAN TV host Andy Smith had a laid-back lifestyle while growing up in Adelaide. It took him a while to catch up with the hustle and bustle in Manila.

"In Australia, I live a few minutes away from the beach. It's quiet and there's almost no one on the road," said Andy, 24, host of the magazine show "QTube" on QTV 11.

Home for Andy now is a rented 65-sq. m. condo unit in Greenhills, San Juan. "Manila is a very busy place. You have to keep your eye on the road when driving," he told Living Stars. Andy moved into his unit at the Blue Horizon Modern on Annapolis Street in March 2008 because he liked the neighborhood.

"The place has the perfect location," he pointed out. "It's near everything, especially Greenhills. Shopping, Cinema 1. It's between Quezon City, where the GMA 7 studios are, and Makati, where most of my modelling jobs are done. The rent is a bit expensive, but it's all worth it."

When he was younger, Andy was into sports. At 16, he was a professional tennis player. He neared the elusive and coveted significant Australian and world rankings until he suffered an injury.

While on vacation in Manila in 2007, he was spotted by a talent scout on the noontime game show "Eat ... Bulaga!" He soon became a commercial model and bagged a prestigious bikini contract (Ok).

In March 2008, he teamed up with video jock Asiel Manzano to host "QTube."

A visit to Andy's place revealed his knack for interior designing. "I designed the whole place myself. I got

FROM E1

LIVING area contemporary doubles as chore for his chore.

ANDY, who grew up near the beach in Adelaide, spends most of his free time on the pool.

A FRAMED picture of his girlfriend Jaisy and rare finds from Tiendesitas

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A salute to good old values

By Marinel R. Cruz
Photos by Mike Jose Oriana

MISS SQUIBB WAS SURPRISED to be one of the hosts of ABS-CBN Foundation's 20th anniversary program on Friday night, but the TV host begged off to spend time with her ailing mother, former President Cory Aquino, who is still confined in the hospital.

An insider source said Kris emceed the hosting gig on Wednesday shortly after her mother—who has been battling colon cancer for more than a year—was brought to the intensive care unit of the Makati Medical Center.

At the Meralco Theater that Friday night, hosting chores were divided among TV-famed co-anchor Korina Sanchez, "Game Ka Na Ba?" host Edu Manzano and news reporter Arnee Arnaldo.

PARTY! PARTY!

The show opened with Tony Award-winning actress and beauty pageant titleholder Lea Salonga singing "Magsimula Ka," accompanied on piano by composer Ryan Cayabyab.

A video on the beginnings of the foundation—which aims to provide a better quality of life for Filipino children—was shown.

Kapamilya network president Charo Santos-Concio, in her opening speech, thanked the "selfless people who have worked so hard for the foundation."

"Sun is a Million Stones 3," winner Erik Santos performed "Don't Stop Believing" with "Game Buddy" stars Aiko Melendez, Hayden Kho, Legazpi and Ellen Adarna.

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